お前をお兄ちゃんにしてやろうか!?

すぎやまリュウ
ill kakao

Omae wo Oni-chan ni Shiteyaroukai?

MF文庫J

お前をお兄ちゃんにしてやろうか!?

すぎやまリュウ
kakao

Omae wo Oni-chan ni Shiteyarouka!?

When the elevator's door opens, we enter the top floor.

I walk, my hand pulled by Uncle.

Straight towards the end of the path, to an outlook restaurant.

Lined-up in the glass showcase are chocolate parfaits, pudding parfaits, fried shrimps and omelets, hamburgers with plenty of sauce.

Since today is a special day, I'm told I can eat anything.

I say I want to eat everything, and Uncle kindly laughs.

"Then, a children's lunch."

The fried shrimp, hamburger and omelet were lined up on a single dish. Pudding parfait for the desert. All of it my favourites and they are delicious.

After filling my tummy with the feast, I watch the outside while drinking cream soda and suddenly think

Eh? What special day was it again?

As I put on a puzzled expression, Uncle says something.

But distracted by the scene outside, I can't hear well.

Prologue

"...chan. Onii-chan. If you don't wake up I'll die. I'll be cornered by despair, die and disappear. Please, don't allow this body to rot away in grief."

I woke up having my body shaken.

In the corner of the comfortable bed that felt like a cloud, I was completely asleep curled up in foetal position.

When I opened my eyes, a black-haired girl was peering into my face.

It was Selene. Even though she was one that had the hardest time waking up early, she was already dressed-up, just like an excited child before a field trip.

"Aren't we quite impatient. Outside is still dark isn't it."

Outside of the window was dark. I recalled the saying that the hour before the dawn is darkest.

"If we don't hurry, we'll get into a traffic jam..."

Rubbing my eyes sleepily, I have searched my heavy memory.

The heart in my chest was pounding heavily. It's because of the strange dream I saw. Still, I couldn't tell what kind of dream was it.

"...did you cry?"

"I must've teared-up when I yawned."

Selene quietly pointed at my pillow.

There was a stain on it. I couldn't help but see it as something incredibly embarrassing.

"...did you see a dream scary enough to cry?"

"I'm not a kid, I won't cry just because of a scary dream."

Selene tilted her head curiously. I could feel a floral scent drifting from her lustrous hair.

Once again after preparing myself for outing, I have stared at Selene.

Ahh, maybe this is the dream's continuation. There's no way she would wake up before dawn.

"Heck, today's a holiday so let me rest for a bit long... ah."

My consciousness cleared and I finally began to think about today's schedule. Selene slowly moved away from me and muttered.

"...everyone has already prepared."

"Ahhh! Maumauland!"

Today us siblings and Murasaki-san are going to play in Maumauland... the pretext being looking for who is the best little sister.

I jumped out of the bed, washed my face and brushed my teeth, then changed clothes. I have prepared the luggage the last night.

The little sisters have gathered in the living room.

"Morning, Nii-chan!"

Tomomi seemed energetic today.

"Good morning, Onii-sama."

A number of boxed lunches and side dishes were packed into a pile, Sayuri removed an apron with a smile and putting lids on top of the boxes, she wrapped them around with a purple cloth.

"Morning, Nii-san."

Yuuki laughed with a mug cup in her hand. Today too she was drinking black coffee.

"Nii-chama's such a sleepyhead. Maple couldn't sleep from excitement yesterday. How difficult, I can't sleep at all. He said."

Raising Maple in both hands, Mika danced with joy.

"Morning, everyone. What about Murasaki-san?"

Sayuri held a smartphone in her hand and confirmed it.

"It seems like she's preparing the car on the parking lot."

"Well then, it might be better to wait down there. I'll take the lunch boxes."

"I can't burden Onii-sama with them."

"I've been leaving everything to you, at least let me do the physical work."

The seven lunch boxes that included Murasaki-san's serving as well were quite heavy. Just a moment ago, Sayuri had finished stuffing another, four-tiered lunch box. I lifted that as well.

Really heavy. Tomomi bounced up and stood in front of me.

"You okay, Nii-chan? Want me to hold half?"

"I said I'm all right. Let's go."

In response to my words, Tomomi said "I'll let myself be spoiled then".

Having to bear with not being spoiled as the oldest sister has built up and exploded earlier, thanks to that now she had calmed herself completely.

"...deepaaarture."

In unexpectedly high spirits, Selene was the first one to walk towards the entrance. I kept up with her. That activeness was unexpected of Selene, who prided herself in being a shut-in.

"Yayy yayy! Maumauland! Mii-chan's first time!!"

From time to time, Mika acted airheaded and said quite risqué things, making Yuuki flustered.

"Mika-chan. The first experience might be, um, correct thing to say, but spoken by a girl it might lead to a misunderstanding..."

"I-is it Yuuki-neechama's first experience too?"

"T-tt-that's right!"

Seeing the two's exchange, lined up together Tomomi and Sayuri grinned.

"Yuuki's so pure."

"Yuuki-san is an unspoiled character isn't she."

Panicked, Yuuki turned towards the two and spoke.

"W-what character!"

We got intimate enough to have such a natural exchange with each other.

After going down the elevator we went outside. The eastern sky had begun to brighten, but the outside was still dim. A minivan with lights turned on was waiting for us along the road. Murasaki-san could be seen in the driver's seat.

According to the forecast, today's weather is going to be sunny, a perfect weather for going out.

6th of May, Monday.

Entire day. Complete. Consultation on the Way Back.

The day in the Maumauland had gone too quickly. It was true that time flows faster when having fun.

Even before the park opened people have lined up in front of the entrance gate and the column had slowly flowed forward as they were admitted.

Since the start, we toured the attractions according to Sayuri's guide.

It was crowded on the holiday, but we were able to ride what we wanted, we enjoyed the parade and the show as well.

For the lunch, we have gone outside of the park and ate what Sayuri had prepared.

When re-entering there was a little incident but... in the end, we have played around until the evening had come.

マウマウランドにて
大隈美佳
おおくま みか
妹候補その3。
11月15日生まれの11歳。
蠍座O型天真爛漫。
立花優希
たちばな ゆうき
妹候補その4。
12月2日生まれの14歳。
射手座A型イケメン気質。
太子堂陽一
たいしどう よういち
5月17日生まれの15歳。
牡牛座A型ツッコミ気質。

By the end, everyone watched as fireworks decorated the night sky, bought some souvenirs in the store, I gave sleeping Mika a piggyback ride to the parked car and exhausted, I sat down on the passenger seat in the front.

Not just Mika, Tomomi, Sayuri, Yuuki and Selene have fallen asleep completely by the time we passed by the traffic jam.

"Yoichi-san, won't you rest as well?"

Holding the handle and facing forward, Murasaki-san muttered so absent-mindedly.

"My sight has somewhat dulled."

"Is that so."

"Um, are you all right?"

Since I didn't have a license I couldn't offer to take over, but I was a little worried.

"There is no problem."

Actually, when we got on the biggest and scariest attraction of Maumauland "Big Volcano Mountain", there was a slight accident.

Yuuki went "It's scary. Impossible. Get on without me, I'll wait", completely terrified.

Seeing that, Mika said "It can't be helped. Mii-chan will cheer with Yuuki-neechama from below.", declining to ride on.

Well, until then everything was still all right, but because of something Mika added a new victim had been born.

"Oh right! In exchange for Mii-chan not riding it, Murasaki-neechama please ride on it and tell me your impressions!"

Hearing Mika's request, serious Murasaki-san responded with "Understood"... and as for what happened after that, I want to quickly forget since Murasaki-san's honour is involved in it.

Anyway, it ended up that Murasaki-san, our guardian, was in our generous care.

Mika felt responsible for forcing her, when Murasaki-san somehow survived and come back, Mika pat her head saying "Good girl, good girl. Don't cry. There there".

In a way, recovering Murasaki-san to such an extent was amazing...

"So it seems like Mika's patting worked?"

At the same time I asked, the minivan shook as Murasaki-san turned the steering wheel to left and right. S-scaryy. Please don't do that when we're travelling at nearly 100kmph.

"Please don't talk about that. Please."

Murasaki-san turned towards me and said that with a straight face. Not good, her eyes aren't laughing. Moreover, she stepped on the accelerator.

"Heck, look ahead!"

Imperceptibly, I have ended up retorting loudly in the car.

"My apologies."

Decreasing the speed, Murasaki-san concentrated on driving again.

For a while after, there was silence. The car smoothly flowed on the road. The traffic jam from when we were leaving the Maumauland's parking lot felt like distant past.

When we entered the metropolitan area, I asked Murasaki-san.

"Um, Murasaki-san."

"What is it?"

"About what happens from now on..."

Vaguely, about future. About the future life. About the living of me and my little sisters. I wondered, if I who haven't decided on anything should have enjoyed today like this.

Everyone had fun and I too, enjoyed myself.

Even though these might be the last days of it, I didn't regret. Of course, if I could stay with everyone for longer... I thought.

Murasaki-san opened her mouth. I had a hunch she'll respond with her usual "I cannot answer".

"Please wait... just a few more days."

I was stunned by the unexpected answer. I wondered if the situation will change in a few days.

"Even if I ask, you won't tell me any more than this, will you."

"Yes. I cannot answer."

Strange. Today, I would be more than happy enough to hear her usual "I cannot answer" response.

Were I to ask any more, Murasaki-san would put on the iron mask, so I decided to fall silent.

When I checked the rear-view mirror, little sisters in the back were like sleeping peacefully.

From tomorrow onwards, will I be able to remain everyone's onii-chan?

7th of May, Tuesday.

Enthusiasm. Hitting the Target. Shooting.

Purchasing some Maumauland souvenirs, I gave some as gifts to Mariko, including Chitose-chan's share.

It would be strange to say I went there alone. And so, I said that I invited friends from middle school... But, Mariko still gave me a wondering look.

The friend that was supposed to go, on that day suddenly got a cold, so a ticket was left over. Was the setting I made.

I felt bad for lying, I shouldn't have bought any souvenirs in the first place and remained silent... after hearing Sayuri's description of the souvenirs and recommended some, I was overpowered and bought them.

Somehow, it feels like I'm making excuses blaming things on others.

Since Mariko looked lonely, I ended up saying "Next time I'll definitely invite you as well!". I don't know when will that happen, after saying it I felt a slight regret.

Mariko responded with "Yup! It's a promise!", she narrowed her eyes and smiled. Because of that smile, I felt guilt. Still, it was a reward for a light lie.

Fortunately, she seemed to like the souvenirs. There was a limited strap, as an limited edition item it was very hard to obtain.

After having such exchange I parted with Mariko, after coming home I checked the smart key.

The situation hasn't changed. Relieved, I headed to Tomomi's room.

I sounded the chime, then Tomomi had opened the door and pulled me inside.

"Nii-chan Nii-chan! Welcome back!"

Wow, her tension's way too high! Like that, Tomomi brought me to the living room.

With a T-shirt and shorts, it was Tomomi's rough dress-up.

"Being energetic today? Heck, you seem three times more energetic than usual."

"See, I mean. I fell asleep when coming back from Maumauland. Thanks to that I've charged my batteries, though I didn't talk enough about how fun was it."

"Judging from that, it seems like you enjoyed Maumauland."

"Right on! You know, that thing where you shoot aliens? It was awesome."

There was an attraction where sitting on a space ship-like gondola, you shot aliens with a built-in gun, certainly, Tomomi got a high score on the day.

Peeking into my face, Tomomi made a concerned expression.

"Nii-chan, you're not going to say it was boring, are you?"

"I've had lots of fun."

Tomomi was relieved, her chest rose up and down with that relief. Her chest looked cramped in that T-shirt... uu... she's my little sister yet my gaze was drawn to the valley...

Why did that happen. I'm disqualified as a brother.

"I'm glad. Relieved. If Nii-chan didn't have fun, I'd feel lonely you see! As a little sister I'm curious what does Nii-chan find fun."

"What are you saying all of a sudden."

"I-I don't think it's sudden, you know? I did a prelude to it."

Tomomi's eyes were swimming and she wouldn't look at me, her voice was excited.

"I think it was natural flow of conversation?"

"You okay? Your voice is being real weird."

"I-I-I'm all right. Nii-chan's such a worrier. Rather than that, be a responsible older brother and answer cute Tomomi-chan's question."

"What do I find fun? Was it."

She nodded strongly, moving her entire body. Naturally, my line of sight had gone into heavily shaking breasts...

C'mon concentrate, me. Uhh, let's see. Perfect, the current situation was very pleasant.

"I have fun when I'm with Tomomi and others."

"Uuu. Saying embarrassing things is banned."

Tomomi blushed and faced downwards.

"You were the one to say it."

"Y-you are right. But, other than that! Something else please!"

Suddenly, Tomomi had started to talk in polite speech.

Even though I considered again, I couldn't find anything. As I numbed in distress, Tomomi raised her voice.

"Then then then! A hobby! Tell me your hobbies Nii-chan! As long as it's not abnormal!"

"What the hell's abnormal. Heck, even if you ask me for hobby... I don't have any... I'm more overwhelmed by your hobbies."

"Don't say thatt. There has to be something! Like games, plastic models or air guns?"

When we were in Akihabara on a date, I've had an opportunity to get in touch with lots of things but I didn't find anything that would make me go "Oh! I want this!".

Seeing Tomomi have fun back then was enough to satisfy me.

"Hmm..."

As I started to think once again, Tomomi moved around the sofa and hanging over from behind, she held out a game controller to me. A soft bulge was hitting the back of my head but...

"All right. If you say so, let's play games!"

As she leaned a bit forward, I turned around to protest.

"I didn't remember saying anything like that, why game all of a sudden? Even if we go against each other, it will be no practice against you, right?"

"Not against each other, I want a game Nii-chan can genuinely enjoy."

"In that case... won't it be boring for you?"

Beside me as I played the game, Tomomi would be bored. She had come out from behind the sofa in panic, sat down next to me and spoke loudly.

"I-I'm fine. You know, like the streams you can watch on the net. Today, play live just for me, Nii-chan."

"Is watching a beginner's weak play interesting? Unless it's Ice Climber or other old games, I don't have any confidence."

"If you're scared to take a step forward, you won't progress. Try the remarkable development and evolution of the latest games! You might find something that's fun for you, Nii-chan. Also, it's because you're a beginner, a first time player, that you might do far beyond expectations! The spectators are usually expecting these kind of rare plays."

"Well, if you say so. Then, what kind of play should I do?"

Tomomi happily nodded and from the shelf under the TV that had a collection of games, she pulled out game software and piled it up on the table.

As she searched on shelf under, she protruded her butt towards me. She was wearing short pants so I couldn't see them but, how do I say it... staring at it directly made me embarrassed. Can't she have some more feminine shame.

I think that Tomomi's friend-like charm is cute but... hmm, should I make her aware or let it go. That is the question.

While I was lost in strange thoughts, Tomomi finished choosing and begun explanation.

"Umm. First, World Club Eleven. In this, there's lots of players from clubs all over the world that actually exist. The real names, really!"

"Is it that amazing? Actually, I'm not that interested in football."

"Eh. Does Nii-chan really have ballsies? Are you really a man?"

"Tomomi, you're a girl so stop saying such vulgar things."

"It's fine, we're siblings and all. Then how about tennis? The graphics evolved since famige era and it's just like live action, the game progressed too. You can do slices, top spin, flat and various other beats."

"Hmm. If it's that real, then isn't it better to play real tennis?"

"Don't say it so bluntly, Nii-chan. Then, this car racing game! You can't get a license yet, it's a perfect game experience. All the recorded games are super

realistic! It covers everything from the latest sports cars to American and European classics."

"It would be appealing to someone who likes these."

"So even car games won't tickle Nii-chan's manly instincts, huhh."

Tomomi is doing her best, maybe I'm too prejudiced.

"It'd be great if you focused on one game and recommended it to me. If there's too many to chose, I honestly won't know what to pick."

"See, Nii-chan, if I recommend a game I'm having fun with, I'll end up doing my best right? That'll be a bit lonely. I want Nii-chan to choose the game."

Tomomi was unusually serious. The masterpiece games from various genres were still piled up on top of the table.

"Got it. Then continue explanation."

"Sure! Next's this. I introduced it before, but the series seventh work... this, is something like a side story of the second part, a popular gangster action game! You can parade in the city at night, blow away gangsters and thugs coming at you! You can go wild in cabaret or do gambling. It's packed with man's dreams!"

"Umm, pass."

"And here I thought it would be a good change of pace for herbivorous Nii-chan. Then, this after all? Become the lord of house of dread and kill intruders with traps."

"Splatter & violence are a bit..."

After that, Tomomi recommended me lots of games, but in the end I didn't get the "This is it!" kind of feeling. Even though I'm honest with my feelings, not getting hooked on anything was pathetic.

"I lost, Nii-chan. I didn't think Tomomi-chan's game collection would one day suffer defeat."

"S-sorry, Tomomi."

"No, it's a result of Nii-chan properly considering and honestly answering. Well then, let's return to previous statement..."

"Previous statement, it can't be..."

Tomomi prepared a controller for herself as well and started the game machine.

"Let's go back to beginning and play FPS!"

So it ends up like this after all, huh. I thought, but it was my fault in the first place for not deciding what kind of game I want to play.

Speaking of games I played with Tomomi, it was just the Railway King series, I was... weaker than the weakest computer character. Also, I had fun because I played with everyone. While I though that, a single question appeared in my mind.

"By the way, Tomomi. Can two people play an FPS at the same time?"

"Of course! Well, although it's a match I'm going to group up with Nii-chan, there's lots of various people blending together on the net. The screen will be split in two, Nii-chan's on the bottom."

"At least let me practice how to mov..."

"It's one of those where you get used as you play."

Tomomi pressed the game's start button. The screen switched and a blank column was filled with names of what it looked like other participating players, after a quick countdown the game started.

I saw Tomomi play it a several times, umm, the right stick on the controller is for aiming and the left one for moving... not good, there's too many buttons and I don't get it.

"Nii-chan, it started! Come this way!"

"E-ehh?! Wait a second. Wait, miss Tomomi."

On the TV with split screen, in the bottom stood my character. That said, what was visible was just the weapon I was holding. In front of me, my comrades started running all at once.

Using the stick to move my character I tried to move forward to chase after her. While the allies on the other side of the wilderness seemed to be trying hard, Tomomi raised her voice.

"Nii-chan, that's someone else! I'm over here!"

Even though we were comrades, everyone wore camouflage clothes and I couldn't tell which one was Tomomi.

When I turned my view around, I saw a character jump in place. So that's Tomomi, huh.

"Everyone look the same, I can't distinguish them."

"At times like these point the cursor on them and the name will appear."

Before long, the appearance of our teammates was gone. I heard gunshots from the distance.

"Ah! Behind you Nii-chan!"

"He?"

As I stood there in daze, I was took down in an instant.

"So they've already come back from the behind. I don't hate people who come attacking."

Tomomi easily took down the enemy that defeated me. Speaking of me, my defeat was displayed in a replay screen. After that, I was suddenly switched to standing alone in the wilderness.

"Nii-chan, once you respawn start with hiding."

"What about Portugal?"

"Respawn I said! Hey, you died again!"

My character standing upright was defeated once again.

It was absurd to be defeated again after five seconds since I was resurrected, I didn't even know where was I shot from.

"All right, I resurrected. I just have to hide, right."

My third self that was in the middle of wilderness has aimed for a base-like building in a straight line.

"Ah! Nii-chan you're going there too straightforward!"

"S-straightforward, I'm just going to the hiding using the shortest route possi... I-I'm dead?!"

As I ran towards the building's entrance, I was shot by a sniper through a sniper rifle from a long distance.

I could tell as my hand on the controller sweated.

"Hey, Tomomi. Is there an item that makes you invincible?"

"Hmm, I don't think there would be one."

If there was one, everyone would be using it. And as I though that, the fourth me was born. By the way, ever since the game started I haven't shot my gun a single time. It seems like pacifists are incompatible with this game.

"I need to at least start shooting.'

Somehow, I tried aiming towards the sky on spot and shooting. *dadadadadadada*! The gunshots echoed.

"Ohh, my controller's shaking."

"Nii-chan, if you fire for no reason enemy will gather, you know?"

"I just resurrected, there's no way enemy will come so fas... ah."

The moment I thought I saw someone peek out from behind a building, my fourth self died.

And fifth, sixth, seventh, eight too. Yeah, I'm dying too much.

My ninth self finally discovered a shadow and hid in it. It was an accident, but a chance had come.

"Tomomi, I finally took one down! H--hey, the bullet's aren't hitting."

My character's gun was blazing. As I pulled the trigger button, the bullets were fired until they ran out.

"Nii-chan... that was me. There's a rule that bullets don't hit allies, so you can't kill them. It's treated as harassment when done to people you don't know, so don't do it."

While saying so, Tomomi easily defeated three people gathered by my careless gunfire. By the way, they were taken down before I could spot them.

"Nii-chan, it can't be helped since you're a beginner, but you're jumping out too much. Also, your gun is one that doesn't have a suppressor so if you shoot, you need to think of coming enemy. Also, if you're standing all the time the sound of footsteps can be heard. Especially in the interiors, you have to walk

slowly as not to make too much sound. Also, when entering the room you need to do cutting the pie..."

"I can't do it all at once, give me advices one by one!"

Involuntarily I spoke very loudly. I've been taken down ever since earlier... so I was slightly angry. I was at fault yet... it was frustrating.

After I let out a loud voice, Tomomi's eyes rounded from surprise.

"S-sorry, did I surprise you?"

Tomomi's expression changed to a smiling one.

"No. Nii-chan, you've gotten passionate haven't ya. Makes me kinda happy."

"But I'm being a burden to comrades, aren't I."

"That's normal for beginners. Above all, I'm very happy to see Nii-chan play seriously. Ah! You have a chance now!"

An enemy soldier had jumped into the middle of my screen by chance. When I looked away, he stood in front of me but since I didn't move he didn't notice me at all.

The enemy soldier hid in the shadows and started exchanging magazines. His figure was in full view from where I was.

"Get him, Nii-chan!"

"U-UOOOOoo!"

Even though I knew I'm shooting someone in a game, I still felt slightly resistive of doing that. Well, game is a game, more like it would be rude not to try to hit him properly.

I aimed with the right stick and pulled the trigger's button.

dadadadadada! And so, the bullets were fired. The enemy... survived. Or rather, my bullets hardly hit him. The enemy noticed me and showered me with bullets after he finished exchanging magazines. Once again I have lied down on the deathbed.

It seems like that was the last kill in the match, I have greatly burdened the team and we were defeated.

"Don't mind Nii-chan! If you aim properly next time it'll go well."

"Y-yeah! One more! One more time!"

Leaving it like that would be indeed pathetic. Also, I finally learned the basics of movement.

"Ohh! So Nii-chan's got guts. Let's go with the next match then."

After that, for three hours I've overdone it with Tomomi playing the FPS.

Or rather, it took me three hours to get one kill... in other words, I defeated one enemy. Meanwhile I was killed five hundred times. As expected, even I can tell I have no talent for it.

I put down the controller after finishing the game, leaned on the sofa's backrest and stretched strongly.

"It might be the first time in my life concentrating so much on a game."

Tomomi raised a bottle of cola she brought halfway through our gaming session and put it up to her mouth.

"Puhaa! Nii-chan's so bad."

"Don't say it. Also, seeing you actually play made me realize very well that you're amazing."

When I thought the enemy managed to dodge her bullets, she moved around aiming accurately, moreover there was another person lying in ambush, but it was like she knew as if everything played on the palm of her hand... anyway, Tomomi fought like a psychic.

"So, how was it Nii-chan? The kill you earned with your own strength."

"Tiring, but there was sense of accomplishment."

Condolences for the guy who got shot by a super novice like me.

"Nii-chan playing a game seriously is super rare, isn't it."

"This is no little fatigue. Please spare me from FPSes."

"How weak. Well then, Tomomi-chan will take care of Nii-chan's eye strain!"

She circled around the sofa and as if to embrace my head, she closed my eyes and started to massage the area around eyes.

The warmth of Tomomi's hands gradually started to feel pleasant. Also, two soft bulges were pressed against the back of my head... n-no good.

"W-wait a moment!"

"Noo waaiting. It's a massage punishment for Nii-chan! Objections are overruled."

Ahh, at this rate I'm going to fall to Tomomi's massage.

I'm getting sleepy real fast.

...speaking of which, when was the last time I've gotten serious with something, I wonder.

Ever since I've ended up in current situation, when thinking about Tomomi and other little sisters I was serious. I intended to face it seriously.

But that was something that had to be done... it was a very long time since I've gotten serious with anything else.

8th of May, Wednesday - Want to Eat? Won't Eat? Request.

Eating a boxed lunch with Mariko has become completely normal. Or rather, I was being given a boxed lunch to eat... or so.

From time to time I feel like making a boxed lunch and returning the favour to her, but all I can do is various types of curry. And curry... no matter how hard I try, it won't work for a boxed lunch.

When I told that to her, Mariko responded with "You're right, it's not really fitting" and laughed innocently.

Meanwhile the conversation turned into "Men who can cook are popular", but that's impossible for me.

Actually, as for cooking, there's a little sister who could be a good teacher but... I ended the topic without telling that to Mariko.

If I told her that I suddenly got five little sisters, she wouldn't believe it as that sounds like a fat lie.

While recalling all that, I rang the chime of Sayuri room's door.

"I have been awaiting you impatiently, Onii-sama!"

Sayuri, who opened the door welcoming me, bowed reverently.

"That's overdoing it..."

"There is nothing exaggerated in us, being alone together. It's little sister's providence."

She raised her face and made a wonderful smile.

Pulled by hand I passed through living room. Kyuu-chan the Myna Bird... was awfully quiet today.

"Hello, Kyuu-chan."

When I called out, Kyuu-chan's head shook to left and right in the cage.

『"Behave yourself when Onii-sama is here."』

It seems like Kyuu-chan was obeying Sayuri's command. Though, still ended up perfectly imitating what Sayuri told him.

With a blush on her cheeks, Sayuri spoke with trembling voice.

"U-umm... Kyuu-chan, please don't say that!"

『"Kyuu-chan, please don't say that!"』

So that's how parrots behave. Though, Kyuu-chan is not a parrot but a myna bird

It seemed like nothing she could say to Kyuu-chan would help, so Sayuri just faced downwards.

Now then, what shell I spend time on with Sayuri today.

"U-umm, Sayuri?"

When I called out to her, Sayuri vigorously raised her head.

"Yes, Onii-sama! Request anything you wish of me!"

"Nonono, I've got no requests."

"I'm happy just being of use to Onii-sama."
Sayuri appealed to me excitedly. When I look at her this way... she's a little bit like a dog. At her butt, I felt as if I've saw an illusion of a tail wagging.

"Ehh... oh right! Thanks for Maumauland. By having your guide, we we able to have a lot of fun time."

"Really?"

Her eyes sparkled.

"Yeah, really. This time you did a lot of work. That's why, if there's anything you'd like from me, ask without refraining yourself."

"Um, then Onii-sama, I have a request."

"What is it?"

"P-p-please reward me for doing my best."

Sayuri's entire body started trembling little by little.

Just recently, she bought some clothes and yet she had still awakened to a reward. Just what on earth does she want?

"Is there something you want?"

"Onii-sama's heart!"

So that's her request!! Still, she means... one specific thing that goes beyond sibling love.

"Even if it's to my cute little sister's request, I can't give you my heart. I'll die."

"That's not what I meant when I said 'heart'! I want Onii-sama's heart, in non-anatomical way!"

"So, if I gave it to you, what would you do with it?"

"I would overlap our hearts and overlap Onii-sama's important thing with mine. Um, that is.. physically."

She's being bashful and is squirming, yet what she says is way too straightforward?!

Even though I rebuked her that we're siblings earlier... what should I do.

"Sayuri, we are siblings."

"Onii-sama, how many flags are you going to break until satisfied? Do you not know the saying 'it's an older brother's shame not to accept little sister's seduction'?"

"Don't you go modifying sayings."

"But, I did my best? I really, really did my best!"

Brazenly using polite speech, Sayuri approached me from the front entering close contact with me. Her still-growing breasts have been stuck onto my body...

I wonder, why do my little sisters love physical contact so much.

When I looked downwards, Sayuri looked up into my face.

"Onii-sama. I have a good idea."

"W-what idea is it?"

Since she looked serious, I ended up using polite speech.

"Wanting your heart is, um... the basis for negotiation, I have begun by recklessly asking, it's was a first swing before asking Onii-sama something of a lower hurdle."

"With you explaining it to me, isn't your negotiation technique spoiled?"

"Ha... uu, Onii-sama is good at negotiations."

No no, you just self-destructed. Normally she's composed, but Sayuri's temper is often unstable.

"Umm, so what's your real request?"

"B-be my first. Take my important thing."

It hardly changed?!

Impossibru. The hurdle hasn't gone down at all. As a person, as a brother, as a man and as a human, I have something important to protect. Please realize it, o' little sister.

"Listen Sayuri, that kind of thing is..."

"That kind of thing, precisely what kind of situation have you assumed, Onii-sama?"

Sayuri smiled like a little devil. No good, a leading question?

"W-what you ask... um, Sayuri's first... means, in other words.... uh."

"Onii-sama? Please be more clear."

"I-I said, taking away girl's important thing... oh right! It's something that shouldn't be taken away."

As I emphasized on it, Sayuri parried it with ease... or rather, she did a backstroke counter.

"I shall gladly dedicate everything I have to Onii-sama."

Sayuri gently coiled her arm around my neck. Not good, if I shake her off here I'll hurt her feelings, if I don't... w-what's going to happen?!

"Onii-sama, there's something like carelessness. As siblings were getting along, they were careless. An accident! Let's make it an accident!"

With completely red face Sayuri appealed to me. If she's to get embarrassed she didn't have to say that... good grief, Sayuri is more out of control than ever today.

"Don't pretend accidents! The best way to go through life is a safe way!"

Suddenly, Sayuri's face turned serious. She stared at me with a lonely expression.

Not good. If I'm stared at by Sayuri with such transient expression, I'll get chills.

"Does Onii-sama hate me?"

That question is... a foul.

"I-I do like you..."

Once again, Sayuri's happy and embarrassed expression returned.

"Then isn't this all right? Under consent of us both, let's cause a major accident."

"Sayuri, a-are you fine with an accident?"

"Of course. For me, no matter how, doing these things with Onii-sama first is more important than anything, it's a wonderful and fortunate thing."

This isn't good. It doesn't seem like I'll persuade her anyhow. In that case... can only do that.

So that at least there's no major accident, I need to crash it.

I hugged Sayuri gently as to wrap around her, I slowly moved my face closer to hers. Sayuri stretched out on her heels and closed her eyes.

"Ahh! Finally Onii-sama slipped into accident with me. It seems like car is going to slip from the cliff and cause great fire!"

I gently kissed... Sayuri's forehead.

Immediately she stared at me with enigmatic, criticizing gaze. Sayuri inflated her cheeks and protested.

"Um, Onii-sama? Right now at most the bumper got indented."

"What's with those comparisons. This is enough to make me so nervous my heart seems like it'll pop out."

"I-is that so! A kiss on my forehead being like the very top of the excitement mountain... oh Onii-sama... you're such a climber."

Her comparisons are strange! Heck, it's escalating...

Sayuri put her ear against the vicinity of my chest and focused on listening to the sound of my heart. It was pounding fast and strong as if I was right after sprinting.

All I could do was to calm down my rough breathing.

For just a while, Sayuri remained in close contact with me without doing anything. Gradually, my breathing and heartbeat had returned to the original rhythm.

When my heart was completely calm, Sayuri quietly moved away from me.

"If I stimulate Onii-sama any more than this, Onii-sama won't last until the night."

What's this about making me last.

I had no idea what to respond with to my little sister who happily narrowed her eyes.

Onii-chan is worried about Sayuri's delusion power. Or rather, I... I kissed my little sister. On her forehead though.

"Onii-sama, your face is red."

"O-o-of course! Never before I had such excessive physical contact with others!"

When I was kid, not knowing anything, when Mariko said "Forehead smooch! Do it. Cheeks are okay too!" I ended up doing it, but I haven't kissed anyone since then.

We're siblings and yet... yeah, what have I done...

"Can it be that you're regretting it?"

"I-I'm not."

If I said I did, I would end up hurting Sayuri.

"There's no need to pretend. Be more honest. You're not satisfied with just forehead, are you?"

Putting a finger on the clothes' button, she stared at me enthusiastically.

"That reminds me I have something to do, so let's leave it at this for today."

"There's no need to be scared, okay? But, it can't be helped. We were strangers just a few weeks ago, until Onii-sama becomes honest and makes love to me, his little sister, I shall cooperate brother rehabilitation... in short, brohabilitation."

"Don't make up new terms!"

"Onii-sama, until you at least stop resisting to enter bath with your little sister, I'll continue making you a respectable older brother."

As Sayuri puffed up her chest, I held my head in my hands.

"Rather, didn't you declare you'll be my little sister?"

Recalling it, Sayuri faced away.

"Ah! What am I doing, I didn't even serve tea. Onii-sama, please sit down first."

In Sayuri's case, whether she becomes my little sister or not, I feel she's still going to be dangerous...

In any case, I could finally catch a breath. I sat down on a cushion relieved. In meantime, Sayuri brewed the usual tea for me.

"The tea is ready, Onii-sama."

"Yeah, thanks Sayuri."

The tea Sayuri gave me wasn't bitter, it had a rich scent and was delicious. The odd conversation from a moment ago seemed like a lie, it calmed down after just a short pause.

Sayuri was a splendid little sister that had nothing to be ashamed of. However, her personality was too extreme in some aspects, like a fly on the ointment, it made me worried.

She wet her lips with tea and stared at me intently. If it's continuation of the conversation from earlier, then please spare me.

"Onii-sama, can I ask you a question?"

"Umm, what is it?"

Among the little sisters, I don't want to try refusing Sayuri as much as possible. When her sisters are there, Sayuri acts mature and holds it in, so when we are alone she ends up behaving more extreme.

Though, earlier she overdid it a little.

"Then, Onii-sama, what's your favourite food?"

"My favourite food?"

"Yes. Favourite food."

The documentation with information on me Murasaki-san prepared should have said I like Japanese food and nikujaga... and Sayuri read that manual more thoroughly than anyone else, what's this about?

"Um, Japanese food."

"If possible, state something western-ish."

Is research on people's favourite food getting popular lately? Mariko asked me that as well...

Speaking of which, I did something bad to Mariko. In the end, I had no idea of my own preferences and couldn't cooperate with her research.

Sayuri stood still like a statue, awaiting my reply.

"Hmm... let's see."

Anything is fine? Something western-ish...

Recently I feel like I've seen a strange dream. I can't remember well, but I did eat a feast in it. Together with someone...

"Oh! Omurice!"

"Omurice, Onii-sama?"

Sayuri's eyes turned round like a cat's from surprise.

"That's right. Omurice."

"That's unexpected. But, perfect, in that case."

Even though I stated that, it was certainly unexpected. Or rather, what's with "perfect"...? When I wondered that, Sayuri tilted her neck.

"By the way, why omurice?"

"I don't understand myself... no! Of course it's true that I want to eat it, I'm not lying or forcing myself. Really... I don't know the reason, but I feel like eating omurice. Is it childish? Also, since Granny never made it, I'm surprised myself."

Sayuri nodded.

"That's great. Onii-sama properly requested something of me. I'm glad."

"I-I see."

"Leave it to me then, Onii-sama. I'll prepare the best omurice there is. By the way, for eggs do you want them sticky, or maybe lightly fried?"

"It was lightly fried. Also, with a flag on top of it."

"A flag?"

"Ah, no. It's nothing. Forget it."

Why did I say "flag"? Also the way I said "it was" felt strange even if I say so myself.

"Well then Onii-sama. Enough of flirting time and question time for now... let's do our best studying today. For the sake of my enrolling into the same Shichiyou Academy Onii-sama is in!"

"Eh? Ah... yes."

It suddenly turned out that we're going to study. Though I'm grateful for that.

For a while Sayuri and I have sat down side by side studying notes and reference books.

When we got to a break, Sayuri quietly stood up.

"It's about time I prepare dinner, isn't it."

"Is there anything for me to help you with?"

"Onii-sama must be tired from studying, please rest."

Sayuri put on an apron in the kitchen and started preparing dinner.

The scent of the rice being cooked drifted towards the living room. Then the scent of miso soup, aroma of a grilled fish burnt brown... e-eh?

In the middle I peeked into the kitchen and asked her.

"Weren't you making omurice?"

Sayuri raised her eyebrows troubled.

"T-that's... um, I ran out of ingredients..."

"S-sorry. You're right. It's just a request I came up with just now.

"I'll make omurice at next opportunity... until then I'll practice it."

She was a girl who once prepared, could do anything. But if she doesn't prepare, she'll be too insecure and will end up failing. And that failure would lead to more failures.

That's why the preparation time was more important than anything to Sayuri.

"I look forward to the omurice you'll make."

And so, today's dinner was Japanese food.

9th of May, Thursday.

Visit. School Gate. Afterschool Date.

Since today she had day duty, it seems like Mariko will be going home late.

I called out to her asking if she needs help with anything, but she answered with "I'm okay, rather than that...", Mariko started to worry about me in turn. It seems like she worried about me not getting along with the other guys from class.

In addition to the fact I had the surname of Taishido, Mariko was always sticking to me so I was completely alienated from other classmates.

When in school, I've been spoiled by Mariko the entire time. The little sisters told me "make sure to make some time for yourself" just recently and yet...

That's it! Surely, this is a chance to make friends!~

Resolved, after school I tried to talk to the classmates who remained behind in the classroom.

"Ah... sorry, I'm going to club activities now."

"I'm s-sorry Taishido-san, I have errands I can't miss. My apologies."

"Don't come to me just because your girlfriend isn't with you."

To the last guy——there's something I want to say just to Hiraoka-kun. Mariko is not my girlfriend, just a childhood friend!

And before I could explain, Hiraoka-kun clicked his tongue and left.

Trying to make some male friends all of a sudden, just because Mariko was busy, was too much huh. Mea culpa, it is all my fault.

It can't be helped. I'll just quietly go home alone. I'm not crying. It's just that something entered my eye. I-I'm not really... lonely or anything.

I headed towards the school gate and walked slowly. There were sparse figures of students leaving school at this time in there.

Right behind the school gate, I found a crowd of students. Moreover, girls raised shrill voices. In that case, it must be some kind of accident or incident. If not, then what on earth was it? A celebrity? A graduate celebrity coming to see their alma mater... something like that might have happened.

By the time I arrived at the gate, the crowd grew conspicuously large.

When someone stopped me from moving, I couldn't help but get curious. Without saying any apologies, curious about the crowd's true identity I stopped moving.

Standing by the side of the school gate——was an incredibly beautiful girl.

Long slender legs and a pose like that of a model. Plain, goth-type clothes with slightly open chest area in design, like a princess from another world.

It seems like she didn't expect this crowd and solidified with a blush.

Finding me among the students surrounding her, the beautiful girl waved her hand to me.

Her expression changed into a smiling, meek and relieved one. Not just the boys, the girls too, everyone present stared at her as she spoke.

"I'm glad. We could properly meet up."

She took a step and the crowd split in two beside me. After quickly walking over to me, she quietly took my arm and we started walking with arms crossed.

"W-wait..."

"Aren't you with Mariko-san today?"

The beautiful girl in goth clothing——Yuuki looked at the surroundings restlessly.

"She's got day duty so she'll be late..."

"I see. I wanted to meet her, but I'm relieved too."

The crowd stirred. It seems like others were more aware of my existence than I thought.

"Oh, isn't that Taishido Yoichi?"

"Eh?!! Seriously?"

"If I'm not wrong, something about a freshman and top of the class..."

"It seems like it's a real love triangle. The possibility she's his his fiancée is high. A beautiful girl coming all the way to school to meet up, she can only be his fiancée.

I increased the pace of my walking.

"Uwah! What happened all of a sudden Nii-sa... Yoichi-kun."

Yuuki called me "nii-san" but restated it afterwards. It seems like she realized I kept silent the existence of my little sisters.

Turning my ears deaf in my mind, I took Yuuki and left the school gate.

After walking for some time from the school, Yuuki spoke to me apologetically.

"I'm sorry Nii-san, for coming all of a sudden."

I stopped moving and shook my head.

"I didn't tell you not to come to my school, that earlier... it was just bad timing. It's nothing for you to worry about."

"B-but... Nii-san, there was a super misunderstanding. L-like, a fiancée..."

Her face was dyed red with embarrassment.

"I'm used to misunderstandings. Also, if I tried to explain, it would turn even more exaggerated."

"Uuu, even though Nii-san doesn't have friends, to get into unnecessary misunderstandings in school... I was careless."

As Yuuki followed up with this sentence I felt like crying. Rather, she was spot on saying that I have no friends, but please stop making me confront reality! Let's change subject.

I started walking and asked.

"By the way, for you to come to visit me, what happened?"

"A-actually, Nii-san... I have a request."

"A request? You could have just waited back home."

Carelessly I slipped that out. Once again Yuuki raised her eyebrows anxiously.

"Uu! Sorry, Nii-san! I didn't think so many people would gather. Wearing a skirt that doesn't suit me, I can't reflect on it enough."

"About that crowd, um... it's because the clothes fit you too well that everyone must have misunderstood you for a model."

"Nii-san is so kind. But don't wrap me up in gentle lies."

It wasn't a lie, but it didn't seem like anything I'd say would make her believe me.

Yuuki really didn't seem to have any confidence in her own girl power.

"You're able to go outside in a skirt now, you grew more than you think you have."

"This is, um... Undying Cicada-san's new design. She said she'd like me to wear outside. Something about monitoring... a-also, since I might have met Mariko-san, I wanted to look properly like a girl. Of course, as not to trouble Nii-san I didn't intend to name myself as the little sister. Like, middle school's junior or... uu..."

She spoke very fast tongue twisters in a panicked, strange voice.

I see. Cicada-san, so Selene pushed Yuuki's back. If a normal girl wears this kind of dress, she'll naturally stand out.

That Selene, isn't this design too aggressive? Her chest is so wide-open... well, it's because Yuuki is wearing it that it stands out... or rather, it fits her too well, so she ended up gathering a crowd around her. It meant that Selene's aggressive choice was perfect.

Yuuki completely fell with it.

My honest and kind little sister worried about many things before coming to see me like this.

The reason Yuuki made up a lie like "middle school's junior" is because I haven't spoken with Mariko about my little sisters in the first place.

If I were to talk about it with Mariko, our current relationship could break... I was afraid of that.

But, still... I'll have to tell her about it sometime.

No, if I think "sometime", I'll end up never telling her about it.

I always pushed the problems back. Escaped. I don't want to escape any more.

If Yuuki didn't come to school, I wouldn't properly let them meet, I think.

Let's make some time soon and introduce Mariko to everyone.

And then, inevitably Mariko will know about what happened this time. I can't even imagine what kind of expression she'll make.

Deciding in my mind, I calmed down a little. After calming down I finally noticed.

Today, Yuuki's actions were bold, very unlike her usual self.

Rushing to school without any prior notice, if it were Tomomi or Sayuri I would say "it can't be helped", but it was unexpected for Yuuki.

"So, what kind of a request you have for me, Yuuki?"

Yuuki lowered her shoulders and muttered facing down. Seeing that gesture of hers suggesting she lost her confidence, I was tempted to encourage her. Tempted to cheer on her.

"I too... wanted to go on a date with Nii-san. O-of course if there was something to do with Mariko-san, Nii-san's appointment would take priority, you wouldn't need to worry about me, I mean..."

"There's no way I won't worry, I mean, you're my little sister."

"Uu...b-but... it's weird right? Going on dates with Nii-san. Back then with Tomomi-chan it was, um... training-like thing... I-I might not need it, but... but..."

Yuuki turned red up to her ears. Unable to settle the sentence properly, she seemed confused.

"It's not weird. A date for siblings to get along well is fine isn't it!"

"I-is that so?"

"In this world, there's lots of siblings that are going on dates together!!"

Though in the end, it was just my opinion. With that said, since Yuuki didn't have any confidence, affirming it was neccessary... I think.

Trembling like a small animal, Yuuki stared at me with slightly watery eyes.

"Is that o-okay, Nii-san? I ended up being a bother to you."

Even the crowd earlier wasn't anyone's fault. Because Yuuki was so attractive, it was something like a natural phenomenon happening.

"That was no bother. Also, me too... I was alone today. So I'm glad you came."

"T-then, can we go on a date just the two of us?!"

"Aren't dates something two people do alone?"

I no longer thought... siblings going on a date is weird.

I was serious on dates with Selene and Tomomi. Siblings going on dates is natural. There's no way it's a bad thing!

"But we're siblings? Isn't date something lovers do?"

"After you yourself said you want to go on a date, I won't let you say you lost your nerve."

"Y-yes..."

Yuuki snuggled up close to me and whispered into my ear.

"Somehow, us walking so close each other feels like we're lovers."

N-no way... Yuuki isn't thinking anyhow like Sayuri... is she?

"Walking while crossing arms with a beauty like Yuuki exhausts my older brother's providence."

"That's embarrassing, Nii-san!"

While she spoke angrily, Yuuki clung onto me even more. It was a little... hard to walk.

Anyway, for today's schedule it was decided to be a date with Yuuki.

Results-wise, since I was ignored by all of my classmates and intended to go home, Yuuki saved me... is how it was.

Now then. If we just go through the residential area like this, it won't feel like a date. It would be a mere stroll.

"Is there anywhere you want to go, Yuuki?"

"If it's with Nii-san, anywhere is going to be fun."

I'm beaten. It felt like "What you'd like to eat?" answered with "Anything is fine!".

This is the simple pattern of "Anything's fine!", but after choosing a menu it might end up "I don't want this after all", and I still wouldn't be able to make a complaint.

Worrying about something like that is unnecessary with Yuuki. That said though, since Yuuki went as far as to summon her courage and come to see me, I want to make the date her reward.

Where should we go?

As I pondered, Yuuki made a proposal.

"Or rather, I'd like to see anywhere Nii-san would like to go."

"Where I'd like to go... is it?"

Nothing came to mind.

Wanting to do something or go somewhere, for nothing like that to come to me... no, unable to come up with anything even as I think about it, I must be seriously ill.

No such illness exists and in the first place I thought its weird as well, it seems like I'm suffering desire deficiency. And so, ignoring the matters related to myself, unless someone gives me a reason to, there are times where I don't know what to do.

Until now, it wasn't a problem. For a long time, there was no one who'd ask "What do you want to do?".

In the end, I'm just an empty human being dragged by the flow. Aren't I.

By interacting with Yuuki and the others, I finally noticed that about myself.

"Wait a moment! I'll... think of it."

"Sure. Take your time."

As we walked together, we came to a bus station. Passing by it, we then walked until we reached the next one. After walking for long enough to get to next bus stop, I couldn't think of anything... nothing.

"Sorry Yuuki. I'm... empty."

"What is it, Nii-san? Empty you say... Nii-san's full to bursting!"

"Full... I'm not a watermelon am I."

"You're full of with little sister's love. Nii-san."

"U-umm, uh... I'm really happy as a brother that you accept me, but I'm empty after all. Even as I think I can't come up with anywhere I'd like to go..."

Yuuki nodded with a convinced expression and smiled.

"So Nii-san thinks he's empty."

"Yeah, apparently there's nothing inside."

Since I didn't notice myself, I have neglected making up my own insides.

Wanting to do this or that.

Since when is it, that I started to think of my own desires as of a bad thing.

Probably it was when I asked for too much from my grandparents, I... have begun to think that wanting something is a bad thing.

I've had a dried-up heart... haven't I. That's why by getting in touch with Yuuki and others, it turned very moist.

Yuuki stared at me intently. Her eyes were clear like gems and her gaze was endlessly straightforward.

"Nii-san isn't empty. More like a big container that has accepted us. Nii-san's inside is very large so from a distance it might look empty. But, deep inside you properly think of yourself... ahh, I can't put it well. Well, Nii-san is like white drawing paper and we are the paint... without both of us there, we can't draw our dreams."

"...you're a real romanticist, Yuuki. That sounded like a song's lyrics."

"Uu... sorry, that was plagiarism. Actually it's from a song of my favourite singer."

She blushed shyly. Even though she was encouraging me, she ended up finding faults in herself.

"I think it's too much to call it plagiarism, that was just a quote."

After a light nod Yuuki continued.

"You see, Nii-san, I don't think there are empty humans. Umm, look! In Nii-san's apartment 701 there's lots of rooms, but there's also Nii-san's own room. Even though it feels like there's none, there is one."

"Don't speak of other's rooms as if they were unidentified organisms."

"Ahahahaha! You're right, Nii-san... ah!"

Suddenly Yuuki put a hand on her belly.

kukyuu————————! A sound came out. Smiling embarrassedly, Yuuki said.

"Nii-san, I'm hungry."

So people whose stomach sounds when they're hungry really exist.

"Let's go eat something then. What would you like to eat?'

With a goal, we could finally decide on a destination.

"T-then! Let's eat something sweet, Nii-san!"

"Sweet? Is it fine not to eat a proper lunch?"

"Speaking of women, it's sweets! Ah! But I think men also like sweets. What kind of sweets does Nii-san like?"

"Let' see. Hmm... if I were to name one..."

Suddenly, an image appeared in my mind. I ended up saying it.

"Pudding parfait I guess."

Yuuki's eyes sparkled.

"T-then I have an idea! Actually, there's a store I've been wanting to go to for a while, Nii-san... c-c-come with me! I don't have courage to go in alone."

Is it a store it's easier to go inside with two people? She did suggest it, so I have no reason to say no.

"Let's go see it then."

She happily nodded and we headed towards the bus stop on the other side of the road.

We got off the bus in front of the station's traffic circle, Yuuki aimed for the back alley to avoid the crowd.

Moving away from the centre, we have wandered into a place that had an adult feel to it... like the Shibuya's Dougenzaka from the other day.

"Is the store you're looking for really in such a place?"

"Y-yeah! It's in a place that's slightly off and doesn't fit it. It's the rare kind of of store that steadily are going away."

The place we arrived at, was something like a western-style coffee shop judging by appearance. It had a kind of bitter feeling, it could be said it looked very showa-era.

Being pushed out by cafeteria's like Star Max or Teris might be not that rare.

When Yuuki slowly opened the door, a bell had rang.

The store was somewhat retro with calm atmosphere.

Massive wooden counter was the first thing that caught my eye. About six box-type table seats of which four faced the window. The windows weren't that large, it felt like a hideout, even if it sounds childish, it seemed like a secret base to me.

The store employee... um, a waitress, was it. The girl in a maid outfit had come and bowed to us.

"Welcome back, Master. Milady."

Can it be, this... when I looked inside carefully, I realized that despite the small size of the store there were many waitresses.

All of them had apron dresses, maid outfits put on.

"Y-Yuuki? This place..."

"It's a m-m-maid café, Nii-san. For a while I was curious about maid's girl power. I did cosplay for one once before, but I really wanted to meet an actual maid!"

Called out to by the maid, Yuuki panicked and started speaking very fast. Speaking of which, I wonder how much was Yuuki's fear of girls overcome.

Earlier, she was nervous in front of the school gate, but it might have been because half of the crowd accounted for the female students and she felt their gazes. Was she still not used to be looked at and called out to by girls she doesn't know?

When she was in Shibuya with Mika, it must have been thanks to Mika that she's overcome it.

I see, not having courage to enter alone meant this.

"It's all right. I'm here with you."

"Y-yes. Thank you, Nii-san."

Prompted by the maid, Yuuki and I headed towards the seats in the innermost part by the window.

But to think the day I visit a maid café would come... knowledge-wise, I have investigated about them for the date practice at Akihabara but...

As I thought, this kind of store is the type that has the service where they write something on omurice with ketchup, right?

While thinking about it as we walked, I have started to become nervous as well.

Right away, a maid put water and towels on the tray and has come to our seats.

It was a different person from the one who had guided us to the seats, it was a small and chubby maid. On the name tag that was on the maid dress, a large "newbie!" was written.

"A-awawawa."

The newbie maid seemed nervous, she trembled as she held the tray. Somehow, it felt dangerous.

Yuuki, me, and the maid too were all nervous for different reasons.

——Momentarily, the maid's feet tangled right in front of us.

"Caref——ul!"

The moment I raised my waist, Yuuki lightly stood up and held the maid up. Except for me of course, who was surprised by Yuuki's reaction speed, the newbie maid also started blinking in surprise.

The tray that was about to slip away from the maid's hands was also safe. Yuuki gently supported her, not even water had spilled from the glass.

Yuuki gently confirmed with the maid who nearly fell over.

"Are you all right?"

Instantaneously, the newbie maid's face... turned red up to her ears.

"E-e-excuse me for my mistake!"

"That's great. It doesn't seem like you were hurt."

"Y-yes! Milady! Thank you very much!"

Yuuki... your reaction just now was too handsome. You were supposed to refine your girl power, but your handsome actions had the shining heart marks appear in the newbie maid's eyes.

Indeed. I can understand why is Yuuki popular with girls. Normally she's nervous around them, but at critical moments her handsomeness stands out, that Yuuki.

The newbie maid still tense, spoke in a strange voice and hurriedly retreated.

By the way, both Yuuki and I ordered pudding parfait and drinks sets. For the drinks Yuuki ordered coffee and I choose tea.

After settling down, Yuuki exhaled loudly.

"I'm surprised, Nii-san. I didn't think a maid would suddenly fall over."

"Y-you're right. Rather, I was more surprised that you have predicted and immediately prevented the maid from falling over. It was as if you knew she would stumble and fall."

Yuuki tilted her head in puzzlement.

"Hmm, no such thing. Just, from time to time I feel 'that's dangerous' and that hunch of mine is often right."

Before, when Mika stumbled I thought that Yuuki reacted too fast. It must mean she's very carefully watching others.

"Also, wasn't Nii-san standing up to go help her? But, have you hesitated because she's a girl? If I support her, she won't be able to say it's sexual harassment."

"Now that you say it. I didn't have time to think of something like sexual harassment, you overestimate me. Rather, it's Yuuki who did well despite being bad with girls."

"Ah! You're right, Nii-san. But when speaking with girls normally, I'm still feeling nervous."

Yuuki laughed innocently, the newbie maid from earlier came back carrying a tray with drinks and pudding parfaits, coming up to our seats.

This time, as not to fall over she walked slowly and carefully.

"T-thank you for waiting!"

The maid put out the parfaits, tea and coffee on the table, then stared at Yuuki. The moment her eyes met with Yuuki's, she blushed.

"T-thanks."

The moment Yuuki nervously responded with thanks, the newbie maid raised her voice.

"U-um! Is Master and Milady... that... going out with each other?!"

"He?!! Eh, uhh..."

At this sudden question, Yuuki's made a dumbfounded expression.

Suddenly coming at people with such private questions, is maid café's service like that?

The two nervous girls blushed and fell silent. This is where I make a proper explanation.

"We might not look similar, but we're siblings. Ah! Just in case let me say, I'm the older brother and Yuuki is my little sister."

So, I did an explanation in polite speech but... the newbie maid didn't even glance at me and started squirming on spot.

"Milady Yuuki... hahnn! Please wait a moment!"

Pressing the tray against her chest, the maid moved away in noisy gait.

It seems like the corner of Yuuki's mouth felt itchy.

"Well, that... it seems like the maid saved by you is looking at you with heart marks in her eyes. You might get some service as a special customer."

"Special?!! Being liked by girls is troubling!"

"In your case, because you naturally let out a feeling of a handsome guy it can't be helped."

"Uu... I'm not a handsome guy, but a girl and yet..."

When we started talking about that, the newbie maid came back with a hand bag of whipped cream.

"Milady! Master! Please let me provide a service with whipped cream!"

While we were taken aback, the newbie maid had created a tower of whipped cream on top of our parfaits.

On mine, it was about five centimetres tall. That seemed pretty sweet.

On the other hand, when it comes to Yuuki's parfait, the yellow pudding was no longer visible under the whipped cream. If my pudding was turned into a Tokyo tower, then Yuuki's was twice as large Tokyo Skytree.

"P-please enjoy yourself!"

In the end, she bowed curtly, with a blush still on her face the newbie maid had gone to serve other customers.

"That's excessive service isn't it, Nii-san."

"You're right. It's not even ice cream."

Since it seemed like it would fall over, Yuuki and I started to fight the mountain of cream on top of the parfaits.

Before I have eaten half of it, my taste had issued an emergency declaration.

"I've gotten a headache from the sweetness..."

Yuuki raised her eyebrows troubled, her shoulders drooped.

"Actually... I'm not too good with sweet stuff. But, girls love sweets don't they. Unless I surpass this, my girl power won't be refined."

"Isn't it fine for a girl to be bad with sweet things?"

"But..."

"If you want to change, I"ll support you. But see... you don't have to force yourself to change. I think you are charming enough as you are now."

"...i-it's embarrassing, Nii-san."

Her hand stopped moving completely. I scooped some of the cream from Yuuki's mountain and ate some. Sweet! My brain screamed from over-nutrition.

"Nii-san too shouldn't force himself!"

"Still, I'm onii-chan here!"

As I ate Yuuki's serving of cream, I suddenly had a thought.

Don't force yourself, what is the "true self" I wonder.

My empty self was slowly filled with whipped cream.

After such overly sweet moments in the afternoon, I spent the time with Yuuki.

10th of May, Friday.

Dad. Mom. Family Meeting.

The wall separating me from the classmates had further thickened. Even before the morning homeroom, everyone seemed restless as they stared at me from afar. They handled me like a rare animal in the zoo.

Yuuki's yesterday visit seemed to have become a rumour and spread throughout the entire school campus. As soon as I got to my seat, Mariko approached me.

The first thing she said was "Is it true you have a fiancée?". It seems like she was quite baffled by the rumour. As Mariko asked the straightforward question, I started thinking.

I wonder if it was all right to say "She's actually my little sister" here. I didn't want to lie any more, but I was worried about the gazes of the surroundings. Yesterday, just because Yuuki came over that much commotion happened. If it turns into Taishido's house scandal, I wonder how much will that get exaggerated.

The only neutral setting I was able to come up with, had leaked from my mouth.

"Umm... actually she's my middle school's junior."

Yeah. How foolish. Lying again...

After hearing my words, Mariko exhaled quietly and said "No matter how much you get along, to come after you to your school... is it really just a junior of yours?" then, tilted her head curiously.

"Y-you see.. s-she's a dutiful junior, she came to deliver me some belongings that I left behind in the student council's room."

Mariko responded with "Hmm, I see. So you it's not like you have a girlfriend.", confirming it.

"No, no way! Definitely not!"

Relieved, Mariko muttered "I was a little worried" and returned to her seat. Worried she says... w-what about?!

And thanks to our exchange in the morning before homeroom, before the lunch break "Taishido Yoichi's fiancée was actually a junior from middle school" and everything had calmed down.

Just this time I was grateful to STRING. The rumours spread in blink of an eye, but so did the follow up.

If I said "Actually... suddenly, I've gotten five little sisters and she's one of them", I wonder what would have happened by now. It's scary just thinking about it.

Still, at least I need to properly tell Mariko about it.

But... if I called Mariko somewhere where others can't hear, it might be misleading in a different way... even without that, it seems like our classmates think we're going out. Anyhow, I don't want to bring any trouble to Mariko.

As I distressed about things, soon enough the school was over.

I went back on the way home together with Mariko, as usual. After a while, I finally noticed.

There was nothing stopping me any more, I can tell her now can't I. There was no other students from our school in the sight.

"Um, uhh..."

When I was about to say it, Mariko said "Make sure not to forget about promise for next week, okay?" and with a smile, she had gone away at a branching of the road.

Poor timing, me.

It can't be helped. When going back on Monday let's tell her about it.

After deciding that, my feelings have calmed down a little.

Overcoming the slightly harder than usual day in school, I somehow returned to Taishido residence and headed to Mika's room.

After ringing on the inter-phone, Mika opened the door and welcoming me, smiled.

"Welcome back Nii-chama!"

"I'm back."

I was pulled in by Mika who used both her arms, then dragged to the living room.

The room was as cute as usual. Also, it was well tidied.

Eh? The amount of origami decorating the TV stand increased. When I approached to check it, I saw it was crane folded in purple paper.

Even compared to the one I have made it was incredibly clumsily made or, how do I put it... it felt unfortunate. The paper was folded many times over and had become shabby.

Right beside me, Mika happily raised her voice.

"You see, this! Murasaki-neechama folded it. She can do anything, but she's bad with origami. How strange."

It feels like if asked to, Murasaki-san would fold a thousand paper cranes as training. Seems like she's sensitive when it comes to things Mika asks her, that person.

"I-is that so, that's unexpected."

She was bad with roller-coasters too and surprisingly clumsy, Murasaki-san is a mysterious person.

Mika lightly stroked Murasaki-san's paper crane with her finger and moved away from the TV stand, then sat down Maple on the sofa. Eh? I wonder what's this uncomfortable feeling.

"Nii-chama, sit over here today."

"S-sure. If you say so."

I sat down on the stool.

"You did well, there there."

While I was sitting Mika embraced my head from the front and started patting my head. Ah, there's a nice, soapy scent... heck, what's with this situation?

"Hey, Mika? I don't remember doing anything worth praise?"

"It's ten years early for you to refer to yourself with 'ore'. Say 'boku' properly."

"Y-yes?"

"Oh no, Father. Yoichi seems to be in rebellious phase. Make sure to scold him."

Mika moved away from me, took up Maple who was sitting on the coach and raised him up.

"Acting like that towards your mother shall not be tolerated."

Then she turned around with a twirl and squinted while looking at me.

"Well well, Father, I did ask you to scold him but you don't have to go that far. Right, Yoichi?"

What on earth is... ah. There was something like that when I was kid. I did do this with Mariko.

Simply put, this situation was playing house.

Without any sign of it starting, I was in the middle of playing house.

"W-wait a second! Hey, Mika. Can it be that my role is..."

"Oh c'mon! And here Mii-chan has gone into a role of mother to be."

"To be, that's not mother but... a madam!"

Mika didn't understand my retort and looked dumbfounded. Even though I said that, what the hell is "madam"!

Anyway, it seems like Mika has the mother's role. I've just had a bad premonition, but I confirmed it once again.

"Can it be, Maple is father and I'm..."

"Nii-chama is eldest son you see?"

Mika said as if it was obvious. This is where I have to ask for role change.

"Wouldn't it be better if I did father's role and Maple was the eldest son? See, I'm quite tall and big."

"Eh! But Maple said he wants to be the father..."

She puffed up her cheeks to the limit.

"I want to be the father too. S-see, I'm probably older than Maple. In manufacturing date-sense."

As expected, there's no way Maple could be manufactured more than fifteen years ago. Eh? Sixteen years?

Anyway, I think it's more reasonable for an older boy like me to be the father, I thought.

Speaking of my real feelings, it was because being the eldest son of an elementary school mother would be embarrassing!

Denying my demands, Mika shook her head to left and right.

"Nii-chama, we can't have playing house feel like playing house. Playing house isn't playing."

W-what?! Mika continued as I was stunned.

"It's playing pretend, so you need to become someone you normally are not."

Even though she said we're not playing earlier... but, let's not find fault in all that. Mika was serious. Also, I know that it's possible to get serious when playing.

Precisely because people are released from responsibility and obligations, they don't have any unnecessary worries and can immerse themselves in the act in 100%.

Because they were playing, it wasn't just a game. Is how it felt.

Yup, with that as a basis let's make proper request.

"Still, having the role of eldest son is embarrassing!"

Mika did not falter.

"Murasaki-neechama did the eldest daughter's role! It was super cute!"

That Murasaki-san did...

She's a good person after all, isn't she? Though she said to be obligated by the contract...

Mika stared at me disheartened, her voice was slightly trembling.

"Or maybe Nii-chama hates playing house? Boys don't want to play house."

"I-I'll do it! Let me do it! I'll do my best as the eldest son!"

Her slightly clouded expression had become bright like sun all at once.,

"Now then, Yoichi will apologize to father."

Our playing house has restarted with a sudden, with a humiliating deployment. But, playing a good child here let's lower my head.

"S-sorry, dad."

Dad... huh.

Speaking of which, I don't think I've used the words "father" and "dad" too many times before. As long as I remember there was no opportunity to use them, words unrelated to me.

Since elementary school, my guardians were Grandpa and Grandma.

Even now when I know who was my real father, it was somewhat hard to say.

Father... Dad.

Really, I can only think of him as of a distant existence, I couldn't think of Jinya-san as of dad.

I think that's why. The word "dad" coming from my mouth felt like a lie.

Mika had Maple nod twice.

"Yoichi is a good child, so I'll especially forgive you."

I had a feeling Maple's character has changed. His way of speaking was slightly old-fashioned. So to Mika the image of dad was something like that.

She stood up, went to the room in the back... and immediately returned with an apron.

Matching the size of Mika's body, it was a cute apron with a floral design.

"Now then, mother will make some delicious meal. The cabbage is expensive, it's troubling. Meeting ends in the household finances is hard, so let's do without cabbage today. We'll use bean sprouts."

That's some arrogant mother. Also, bean sprouts for lunch...

"Cooking is love, the sprouts are ally of the household."

It was unlike the usual innocent and gullible Mika. Mother needs to do her best. That kind of sense of duty could be felt... rather, it must be just my imagination.

"Pam pam pam pam. Pam pam pam pam. Cut bean sprouts into rice cooker♪ put in sauce and red ginger♪ healthy, tasty, reasonable."

Bean sprouts and rice, it's just rice cooked with vegetables!

The voice of my heart responded... not really, but Mika stopped moving her hands and raised Maple's hands in banzai gesture.

"Ah, father's shoulders are stiff."

Mika stared into my face. It was nothing but a silent protest to force me to participate.

"Ah! Yes! Dad, I just need to rub your shoulders right?"

"Nii-chama, it's 'boku' right?"

So I can't use "ore" huh. It can't be helped. Let's redo it. Childishly, I need to behave childishly.

"I-I'll rub dad's shoulders, okay?"

"Ohh! Son of mine, you're growing in the mind and body aren't you."

If I think about Maple's character any more, I feel like I'll lose. I took Maple from the sofa and sat him down on the stool again, then I circled around him and rubbed his shoulders.

Super sloppy shoulders.

"H-how is it, dad?"

"Yoichi is a good son. It's so comfortable I've gotten sleepy."

Mika changed the tone of voice.

"Oh my, father seems dopey. The work is tiring after all."

D-dopey... no, I can't retort here.

"Hey, Mika... not, Mom. What kind of work does dad do?"

"Father is a train's conductor, next time he's supposed to take an exam to become a driver."

She smoothly replied to my question without any pause. It seems like Maple's character and the role he plays was more solid than I thought.

"Now then, father went to sleep, how about Yoichi and Mother get along meanwhile?"

Heyy! Where did the cooking go?! As I retorted in my mind, Mika quickly removed the apron.

"Get along, that's..."

Mika sat in seiza on the carpet and pat her lap twice.

"Now, come here Yoichi."

This, it's a lap pillow isn't it. Am I going to borrow the lap pillow of a little sister from elementary school...?!

"Even if you tell me to come, it's embarrassing..."

"What Mother says is absolute."

Absolute?! Seriously?

"Does Yoichi hate Mom?"

Quickly tears appeared in Mika's eyes, the itching and embarrassment that welled up in my mind, my inability to successfully imagine a mother, were all threw out of the window.

"L-like... this?"

I'm embarrassed after all. Calling my little sister from elementary school "mom", a high school boy lying on a lap pillow!

"Nii-chama, it's okay to be spoiled by Mii-chan, okay?"

"But being spoiled feels embarrassing."

"It's just parents and child here? Right, Father? See, Father says so too? Since when Yoichi has become such worthless son, he says."

"Worthless son... rather, wasn't Dad asleep..."

Mika exhaled in a troubled manner.

"Yoichi is being really fussy, can it be that you're hungry? Want boobies? Want to drink from boobies?"

"What on earth is my age's setting!"

"Children are always cute. Nii-chama, become a baby?"

"Please spare me at least that!"

"Ehh, how boring."

Please stop raising your clothes up to your breasts, miss little sister.

She continued with a smile.

"Then, let's stop with boobies, instead practice saying 'I love mom'."

"Um, p-please spare me at least that!"

Momentarily, tears appeared in Mika's eyes.

"Mii-chan wants Nii-chama to adore her as mom! If you don't want to say mom, I'll do this!"

Once again, she tried to take off her top.

If I don't say it... she'll undress?!

Mika accused me with a serious expression.

"Mom, or boobies. Choose one!"

"A-aren't there any other choices?"

"There isn't! Mii-chan too, is actually embarrassed about boobies too! Cause' you're not a baby"

From the middle of it, it seems like Mika got confused as well.

A-anyway, there are two choices. No, no matter how I think about it, there's only one way.

I resolved myself. It's enough that only I embarrass myself here.

"G-got it! I decided!"

"Nii-chama, is it boobies?"

"N-no! U-umm, M-M-Mo..."

She stared into my eyes. Normally she would be looking up at me, but being given a lap pillow our position was reversed.

In silence, Mika waited for me to speak.

"MM-M-M-MM-Mo-Mo...Mom... I love y...ou...."

"Your voice was too quiet and I barely could hear the latter half."

As she attempted to raise the hem of her clothes, I clearly declared.

"I-I love Mom!"

"One more time!"

"I love Mom!"

"More!"

"I love Mom!"

"More more!"

"I love Mom!"

Rhythmically, with an interlude I chanted embarrassing words.

Mika made a relieved, satisfied expression.

"Well said! Yoichi is a very good child. Oh my, don't leave out Dad."

She embraced my head and once again started patting it.

Yeah, so embarrassing I feel like dying.

But, what's this I wonder. I was slightly... happy.

I love mom. Such a thing, there wasn't a single opportunity for me to say these words. It was a presence even more distant than that of dad's.

Words of appreciation for the person who birthed me onto this world... are they.

I wonder when was the last time I was spoiled by someone like this. I was at an unexpected ease.

It was enough of playing house and we didn't continue afterwards, as usual we did fold origami or did some painting, the time I spent with Mika felt strangely dense.

11th of May, Saturday.

Everyone. Gathering. Happy Weekend.

The Saturday morning was lively.

Completely familiar with it, early in the morning Sayuri entered the kitchen and immediately started preparing breakfast. Preparing the table and the arranging the dishes was Mika's job.

When I tried to help "Nii-chama just rest!", she had gotten angry at me. Incomprehensible.

As from time to time Mika seemed like she'll trip, Yuuki gently watched over her. There was nowhere for me to help out.

Selene was as usual, in her own pace, she lied down on the sofa in the living room and was watching television. As she did so, Tomomi had approached her and slapping her lightly on the butt, made her stand up.

"Then, Selene will do laundry with me."

"...why? It's not that difficult is it?"

"Mm? It's a simple mission even for me alone."

"...yup, do your best."

As Selene once again curled up on the sofa, Tomomi let out a forced sigh.

"I see. Nii-chan is watching, and yet just Selene won't do aaanything. But it can't be helped. You're NEET attribute after all.

I sat down on the sofa without anything to do... as I sat down beside Maple, Selene silently sought help from me.

"T-then, how about you become a TV observer in my place?"

I can help with laundry. In the first place, I was the one hoarding it. And when I thought that, Tomomi instantly rejected my proposal.

"Nii-chan, you're spoiling Selene too much."

"Really?"

"...not really."

Selene interrupted with a murmur. The moment we let her out of our sight, she lied down on the sofa again. What a dreadful neet soul. Tomomi's shoulders slumped at Selene's lack of motivation.

"Well, if Nii-chan is fine with that, I don't care. I'll go turn on the washing machine and come back. Um, put in the laundry, detergent, press the button and it's done, right?"

Selene stood up quietly.

"...separate patterned and plain things, easily torn ones put in the washing net. For things that don't get washed in the washing machine, wash by hand. Be careful not to leave dry marks. Make sure to measure the amount of detergent, make sure to put softener into the dedicated port or the clothes will be pitiful..."

The things I wear don't have any dry marks though...

Tomomi pursed her lips.

"It's fine isn't it, without being so precise!"

Selene made a troubled expression. It was unusual for her, as she normally didn't display much emotions on her face.

"Hey Selene. Won't you teach Tomomi?"

For a moment, Tomomi made a discontent expression. But soon enough she smiled, it seems like she guessed what I was thinking.

"Having an expert would be really helpful. Is there a knowledgeable laundry sage anywhere near?"

"...here."

Quietly, Selene raised her hand.

"Nn then! Let's go?"

"...yes."

The two had gone to bathroom that had the washing machine. And like usual, I remained behind bored. I should have gone with them to help out as well.

While I thought that, Mika's cheerful voice came from the dining room.

"Dishes are prepared!"

Sayuri peeked out from the kitchen to check on the state of dining room. On top of the table were lined up dishes for several people.

"Thank you very much, Mika-san. Leave the rest to me."

Mika headed towards the kitchen at brisk pace.

"Mii-chan wants to help with cooking!"

"Is it all right?"

"I want to check my potential."

As Mika displayed her motivation, Sayuri laughed, troubled.

"I see. But, the preparations are mostly complete."

Before we realized, the scent of baked bread had begun drifting around us.

"Was Mii-chan useless?!"

"Umm... that's..."

This time from the kitchen, a line of sight pleaded for my help. Apparently, Sayuri was bad at dealing with Mika. On the other hand, to say, Mika admired Sayuri for being able to cook and stared at her with sparkle in her eyes.

Yuuki who watched their exchange the entire time made a proposal.

"Then, Mika-chan together with me will pour everyone's soup into cups, how about it?"

"Mii-chan's in charge of soup?"

"Indeed. Right? It's fine isn't it, Sayuri-chan?"

"Y-yes! Please do it!"

It seems like the three over here were doing well too. I stood up from the sofa and proposed.

"Then I'll help t..."

"Niichama please sit."

"Nii-san can just rest."

"I can't have Onii-sama help out."

The three said so at once and forced me to tumble back onto the sofa.

Everyone finished breakfast together in the dining room. It wouldn't be strange if Murasaki-san came soon... but she didn't appear.

This week too, the situation had probably been recognized as status quo.

I recalled the words Murasaki-san said to me inside the car on the way home from Maumauland, "Please wait... just a few more days".

That time still hasn't come, that day... might be the conclusion day.

When I tried to wash the mountain of dishes in the kitchen, I was stopped by Sayuri.

"Onii-sama spends his precious time during the week, please rest at least on the weekend."

"But I can't calm down unless I do something."

"Please do your best to calm down then."

When Sayuri started washing dishes, before I realized, Tomomi had come to and started to help.

"C'mon Nii-chan! Go forth! We're going to take care of this."

When I returned to the living room, Yuuki and Mika started the vacuum cleaner.

"Brrruuunnn! Cyclone, cyclone! Mii-chan is a little sister whose sucking power never falls, you know?"

"My heart feels like it's being sucked in by Mika-chan's charm."

How did that kind of conversation come to life. Both Mika and Yuuki seemed to to have fun, I'm slightly envious.

Rather, I feel like a lazy brother who uses his little sisters as housekeepers.

And, as I was about to fall into self loathing, a fallen angel... or more like, a lazy angel had descended. Selene lied down on the sofa in the living room, lazing around.

I discovered a comrade in laziness! I crouched down in front of Selene, who lied on the sofa.

"Selene is my comrade, right? You're embarrassed not having anything to do as well, right?"

"...unfortunately, you're wrong."

When I thought she was just lying down, Selene was doing rough sketches of clothing design with a touch pen on the PDA terminal.

"Y-you're working?"

"...yes. Want to see?"

Her hand stopped moving, then Selene showed me her rough sketches one after another.

Each design was unique. Also, strangely, it felt obvious to me for whom each design was made.

The dress on the last page was surely one fitting Yuuki's image.

Of course, it wasn't just Yuuki, there were also clothes for Mika, Sayuri and Tomomi, that Selene sketched.

"Master Cicada, cheers for good work."

"...yes."

Not denying, without any humility, Selene obediently nodded. It was a slightly dry reaction. Can it be that she's not in a good mood?

"Umm, when I said 'master' just now it wasn't irony, I was serious."

Selene tilted her head puzzled. It seems like I was over-thinking it.

"Uh, it's nothing. Yes."

She returned her head to original position and opened her mouth.

"...I have a request for Onii-chan."

After putting the PDA with its screen downwards on top of the table, Selene fell down dramatically on the sofa and continued with just her face turned towards me.

"...there's some goods I want no matter what and need to mail order."

"And that is?"

"...a girl's secret."

So she doesn't want to tell me what is it.

"Umm, since it's a mail order... it's going to be delivered to your room right?"

"...I have made the recipient Onii-chan and specified his room for address. It'll arrive tomorrow. However... I carelessly forgot to specify the time."

"So, we don't know when will it arrive tomorrow."

"...yes."

"Then, is there any problem with its reception?"

Although it's not like a special ability, but I wonder what's going on with Selene, who's really good at spending the entire day in the room.

"...actually, it had become so that I have to go outside no matter what."

"Go outside?! Eh, uhh.. that's great, Selene!"

I got suddenly surprised, I need to congratulate her with progress.

"...it's no big deal."

She puffed up her chest while still lying down. Just a bit boastful.

Recently, Selene was quite active. After going to Akihabara, she started going outside more and more.

Cheering her on here, is the Onii-chan's job.

"All right. Leave the package to me."

"...is it really okay?"

"You want to receive that package tomorrow no matter what, right?"

She nodded twice.

"I'll receive it instead of you."

It's addressed to me, there shouldn't be any problem.

"...thank you very much."

"By the way, is it really okay for you to go out alone?"

"...no problem."

If I doubt her too much, it'll feel like I'm not trusting Selene, let's not ask any more.

When I stood up from my crouching posture, Yuuki and Mika who finished cleaning had stood together side by side. Were they watching at my and Selene's conversation?

Yuuki spoke.

"Nii-san, are you house-sitting tomorrow?"

"Yeah. I'll be home all day."

Mika made a small jump on spot.

"You see! Mii-chan, tomorrow! Is going together with Maple and Yuuki-neechama on a date!"

"Date huh... ah, no, um... take care then."

Even if I limit my over-protectiveness, if it's with Yuuki, Mika will be safe. Yuuki laughed shyly.

"We aren't going that far, we'll be back before dinner."

"Where are you going?"

Mika raised both her hands.

"Department store!"

She said the whole, long and tongue-twisting name without any pronunciation. How astounding... time after time I'm thinking Mika is really free.

"Umm, Nii-san. Even though we said date, it's just some shopping."

Troubled, Yuuki lowered her eyebrows. I think it'll be all right, but let's say this once.

"Make sure not to get lost."

"It's okay, Nii-san. I have a child (児童 Jidou) tracking system built in."

"Automatic (自動) tracking? What does it automatically track?"

"That's wrong. Not, automatic, but child. It's an ability to trace elementary school and younger children. And my tracking finger right now is aiming for Mika-chan's... side!"

Yuuki circled around Mika, crouched and started tickling her.

"Tickletickletickle!"

"KyaaaaaaaaAAAaAAAAAA!"

At first Mika screamed, but then let out a happy squeals, before I realized the two in front of me started having fun together. What the on earth is this situation.

"Tomuh tishling, Mii-shan's dyiinggh."

When Mika could no longer articulate, Yuuki released her from tickling grasp, stood up and exchanged stares with me.

"And so, tomorrow we won't be able to accompany Nii-san. Sorry."

"Don't treat me like a small animal that would die of loneliness."

Hand in hand, the two had gone to put away the vacuum cleaner.

So, the ones remaining... are Tomomi and Sayuri, huh. A storm might be actually coming.

The two put on a façade when the other little sisters are here. If their nature gets exposed... it might be quite stormy.

And while I worried about that, Sayuri brought me a cup of tea on a tray.

"Onii-sama, I prepared tea."

"Thanks, I'll have some."

I resat myself on the sofa and took the teacup in my hand. Holding the tray against her chest, Sayuri spoke.

"Um, Onii-sama, about tomorrow..."

"Can it be that you plan to go out as well?"

"How do you know?"

Sayuri opened her eyes wide from surprise. So, alone with Tomomi? Judging from Sayuri's personality, I don't think she'll allow it...

And then, carrying a heap of finished laundry in a basket, Tomomi entered the living room.

"Heey, Selene! Washing's complete, please teach me how to dry it."

"...yes."

Selene slowly raised her body from the sofa. Continuing, Tomomi spoke to me.

"Also, Nii-chan! About tomorrow, I'll be going out so I leave house-sitting to you."

"So you're going out too, Tomomi?"

"Eh? 'too', means someone else is going out as well?"

"That'd be everyone except for me."

"Hee. So such coincidences do happen."

Tomomi spoke kind of awkwardly, her line of sight avoided me... or that's the feeling I had. I'm probably over-thinking it.

Sayuri made a broad smile.

"Then, how about Onii-sama goes together with me?"

In a split second, Tomomi screamed.

"W-wha, H-HEYYY! T-then let's have a match over Nii-chan!"

You're panicking too much, Tomomi. I spoke to the both of them.

"Tomorrow instead of Selene I'm going to receive a package, I promised her that just now. I'm not going out."

Sayuri smiled again.

"Is that so, that's unfortunate."

Like that, she turned towards Tomomi and Selene.

"Well, Selene-san and Tomomi-san, please continue with the laundry."

"...roger."

"S-sure! A-, aa-ah. So Nii-chan's alone tomorrow."

Pulling Selene, Tomomi headed towards the veranda. Sayuri retracted to the kitchen as well.

Everyone is going out tomorrow, huh.

Even though it was Selene's request, waiting for a package that god knows when will come will be boring.

Eh? Strange. A while ago I would have thought "I can finally calm down and study alone!" and was happy about it.

Yeah, surely... it'll be lonely.

Also, this anxiety, or maybe dissatisfaction...

Not knowing when, or what'll happen, I'll have to spend time alone tomorrow.

I'd never think of restraining my little sisters, but possibly, it could be the last Sunday. When I thought so, it seemed a waste not to spend it together.

12th of May, Sunday.

Disband. Dispersal. Horrible Ending.

When I opened my eyes, I was alone on a large bed.

Any signs of other people vanished from this room. It wasn't just the bedroom. The room number 701 was too spacious just for me.

It was still half past seven in the morning, but everyone must have finished preparations and left already. The stores open from around ten o'clock, don't they.

Vaguely thinking about things I washed my face and brushed my teeth in the bathroom, then headed to the kitchen.

Breakfast for one person was prepared. On the table, there was a memo on a mushroom-patterned piece of paper.

『"Fry some bread, warm the soup up and please eat. Sayuri."』

Just like it was said, I fried some bread in the toaster, warmed up the soup, then ate it together with prepared salad and Spanish omelette.

In the back of the kitchen there wasa lunch box. In there too, was a mushroom-patterned note.

『"Make sure to properly eat it for lunch. Sayuri."』

Even though I just finished eating breakfast, I got curious what kind of lunch is it.

I opened the lid to take a look. There were fried eggs and sausage octopi. Cooked and rolled taro, as well as boiled spinach for side dish.

If there was a problem, it would be the pink heart symbol drawn on top of the white rice... It was accompanied with a message "LOVE Sayuri" written with nori.

Loved wife's lunch box or something?! Once the lunch comes I need to eat it without leaving anything behind, destroying the evidence (?).

I've always been watching TV with Mika or Selene, so being alone was lonely.

I hope Selene's package is delivered as soon as possible. Then, I'll mail and meet up with someone. Mika's with Yuuki and Tomomi should be all right alone.

Although I was worried about Selene, if I go with her I might hinder her road to independence. Speaking of which, I still haven't gone on a date with Sayuri. Wanting to grant her a date would sound arrogant, in the first place I'm not sure if it's actually brother's role to do that...

I won't progress even if I think about it. Let's just quietly wait for the package to come.

Turning off the TV, I spaced out while sitting on the coach.

On weekdays I always was with one of the little sisters, on weekdays I always ended up with everyone.

It was too quiet and kind of awful. It seems like thinking I can be calm when alone was a mistake.

How long am I going to continue this kind of life I wonder.

As I think of what's ahead, I get anxious.

The past I can remember seems feels like they're all pleasant memories.

How strange. I was told by everyone "I won't become your little sister" by everyone, and yet...

Thinking about it, was I able to act like onii-chan for everyone this week? I started considering.

Selene has graduated from being a NEET. All that's left is for her to go to school.

Tomomi completely calmed down. More like, this week I was the childish one. Please spare me any more FPSes. Blood had completely rushed to my head.

Really, when was the last time I've heated up that much.

Come to think of it, recently I requested omurice from Sayuri, ate some pudding parfait with Yuuki... both of those were menu I chose, but I still don't know how did I come up with that.

Maybe there's some kind of my "true self" I haven't noticed existing, and he might like omurice and pudding... though in that case, just what on earth is the me of now! I'll turn into a fake.

But, it's somewhere there deep inside my heart. My favourites being omurice and pudding parfait.

As I tried to recall it... my teeth had started to hurt.

The pudding in maid café we went to with Yuuki was insanely sweet. While I ate it somehow, I felt like the name 'whipped cream' was like a white nightmare.

That's right, even if it isn't a nightmare... Mika's playing house, that was really hard. I'm glad I was able to finish it up early. I was almost turned into a baby.

But... I didn't think Mika patting my head would be that pleasant.

It was embarrassing, but also comforting...

N-not good. What are you thinking about. Being spoiled by your little sister... I'm the onii-chan here. I must get a grip.

When I looked at the clock, it seemed like time hasn't progressed at all.

Let's try studying.

I went back to my room and started working on self-study. It was quiet so I thought I could concentrate, but it was no faster than normal.

Even though the evening came, Selene's package has not. At this rate it'll be night soon.

My self-studying did not progress, without any book to read I played with my smartphone in a dim room and a message had come from Mariko through STRING.

"On 17th Dad and Mom are going to relatives, Chitose is staying at friend's house too, so it seems like we'll be alone on the important day." she wrote.

Furthermore "Ah! It'll be just us two, but there's no deep meaning behind it!" she added on to the message. It's a coincidence... isn't it? Mariko is a serious person, so she might actually be troubled with how it turned out. I don't look at Mariko that way either...

Heck, let's stop this. It's embarrassing.

Also, I wonder what does she mean by "important day".

17th of May. Friday... ah...

Recently my head was full of little sisters and everything about me had completely flew out of it.

17th of May is my birthday, isn't it.

In the first place, when I was living with Grandpa and Grandma, my birthdays were very curt, I have only vague memories of celebrating them.

It didn't feel like that much special day.

...can it be, that Mariko wants to try celebrating my birthday, so she's been asking about my favourites for a while?

In that case...

UWAHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH.

I'm no good.

When I replied to her with an apology, she responded with "Can it be that you forgot about your birthday?" with an emoticon of a surprised face. But then, she added "In truth, I wanted to make it a surprise".

For a childhood friend with whom I was separated for so long to remember when is my birthday, Mariko is an amazing girl. I need to ask her when is her birthday and properly return it.

When I was about to ask Mariko when is her birthday——.

Suddenly the entrance had become noisy, it seems like someone had come back.

I replied to Mariko with "I look forward to Friday" and headed towards the entrance.

For some reason, the little sisters have come back home all together.

"Welcome back... hey, didn't you all go out separately?"

Sayuri smiled broadly.

"We're back. Earlier, we have rejoined together at station and came back all together. I bought ingredients in the supermarket, I shall prepare dinner soon."

Normally, Tomomi would have gone in front and explained, but this time Sayuri behaved like the leader. Did Tomomi gave up on forcing herself to act like the oldest sister and is now taking turns with Sayuri for the role of a leader?

When I turned my gaze towards Tomomi, with a supermarket's shopping bag in her hand she raised her voice.

"A-all right! Everyone wash your hands. It's warm, so it's important to wash your mouth. Make sure no bad virus enters your body!!"

Tomomi's eyes wouldn't focus, she seemed strange. As she panicked, from her back Mika jumped out like a little rabbit.

"We're back Nii-chama! Mii-chan will go wash her mouth!"

Yuuki snuggled up to Mika from behind.

"We're back, Nii-san. Seems like you were a good kid."

Good kid, really, I'm not a child. Good grief.

The last one, was Selene who had an exhausted expression.

"...I feel like dying."

She seems fairly tired.

The little sisters came in droves from the entrance. Unsteadily like a zombie, Selene closed onto me.

"...Onii-chan, about the package."

She had a disheartened expression. Her breath was rough... are you really okay, Selene?

"It still hasn't come."

"...actually... when I looked again, the order was cancelled... I'm sorry."

"Eh?! I-is that so."

"...it was misunderstanding. There wasn't a package for today."

Moving as if she was in slow motion, Selene bowed.

"You don't have to apologize so much. Misunderstandings happen to anyone."

"...yes. Thank you for your concern. I'm feeling better now."

So, today, my fate was to wait entire day in vain... Ah! Fate can still be changed so it's better say it was destiny.

I was destined to wait in vain! Eh, doesn't sound too cool.

Still, it was somewhat wasteful.

I would've gone to play with everyone, having to do house-sitting alone broke my mood.

Heck, complaining is pointless. It can't be helped. I was the one who decided to listen to Selene's request. I need to put up with it as onii-chan.

It seems like everyone spent their day busily, little sisters' joy is also elder brother's joy.

Selene's head swayed unsteadily.

"Cheers for good work, Selene. Um, are you okay?"

"...I want to laze around on the sofa, now."

As Selene headed to the living room in unsteady gait, Tomomi called out to her with "Heyy! Make sure to wash your hands and teeth in bathroom!". Selene somehow managed to change her course to one leading to washroom. I'm a little worried.

Unexpectedly, my eyes met Tomomi's.

"Where did you go today Tomomi?"

"Eh? D-doesn't really matter."

I was lightly dodged. It wasn't that she avoided me, but well... even if we're siblings, it doesn't mean I have to know everything... huh.

Anyway, for now I'm relieved that everyone came back safely.

"Gargling over!"

Carrying Maple, Mika headed to the living room. Chasing after her with slow moves was Yuuki.

Sayuri headed to the kitchen. I took the supermarket's shopping bag from Tomomi and carried it to the kitchen.

Being together with everyone like this is happiness, I thought.

After we finished eating dinner, we entered the tea time in the dining room.

I was being avoided by Tomomi, but let's try asking.

"Where did each of you go today?"

At my question, Tomomi stood up from her seat.

"More importantly, Nii-chan!"

"You say so, but isn't it fine if you at least tell stories of what happened?"

"There's nothing in particular to say!"

Her chest strongly swayed vertically... or rather, Tomomi declared while puffing her chest largely.

"If not Tomomi, then how about Selene, Sayuri, Yuuki or Mika."

"...I have none."

"Nothing in particular."

"Nothing from me either."

"Noope!"

It was as if they have arranged it beforehand. Tomomi first grinned and then she relaxed her mouth.

"That's how it is, so Nii-chan answers my question now. About next Friday, you've got it open right?"

"By Friday, you mean the 17th?"

"Yup! That's right. On that day..."

"Oh, I've got something to do on that day..."

"Hmhmm, so you've got something to do. So even Nii-chan has errands to do."

And when she finished saying that, when I thought she made an astonished expression, Tomomi raised a high-pitched voice.

"S-s-seriously?"

"Yeah, seriously."

The fact I had something planned, was unexpected enough to surprise Tomomi.

I've been spending weekdays with my little sisters all the time, it might have been inevitable.

From both Yuuki and Mika I've heard "Getting along with friends from school is important", earlier, they have encouraged me to do so. This time, I took them up on their words, so to say...

"Can't that be planned for some other day?"

"Hmm, it's a promise from quite a while ago..."

I can't scrap my appointment with Mariko so easily. One thing that it's with Mariko, but also there's the fact I recalled about my birthday.

Suddenly, from a long time ago, a memory of someone celebrating my birthday in the same manner was revived.

I couldn't remember the details, but even I had my birthday celebrated before.

Tomomi's voice turned even more rough.

"When did you promise that?!"

"From about two weeks ago. I've told you about her before but, I was invited by my childhood friend, Mariko. Does your plan have to be on the 17th?"

Eh? Not just Tomomi, Selene, Sayuri, Yuuki and Mika too had hopeless expressions.

Impatiently, Tomomi responded.

"N-not really, see."

What, then there's no problem. Tomomi was being a bit strange today.

"In that case, if you could shift it it on the other day, it would be helpful."

"I-it's not good! No shifting! C'mon Nii-chan! If you don't come on Friday, Mika will be lonely!"

When I glanced at Mika, she lowered her head downheartedly.

"It's better to treasure relationship with friends, was what Mika told me though..."

Mika downcast her gaze and muttered.

"That's right, Mii-chan said so, but..."

From her big eyes, suddenly, fell large drops like jewels.

This is... an emergency.

Tomomi howled.

"It has nothing to do with it! What Mika said... uhh... wasn't said! None of it!"

Overcome with emotions, Mika started weeping.

"U-uu... Mii-chan isn't crying! She isn't crying!"

Why did Mika start to cry?

My words must have acted like a trigger. In that case, it's my fault.

Yuuki, who sat beside Mika had gently embraced her head. Then Yuuki turned her face in my direction. Rather than blaming one, she had a lonely expression.

"Nii-san, is 17th impossible no matter what?"

Possible or not, Mariko was first. Moreover, it's a birthday celebration. Even though I didn't remember myself... she did.

Sayuri stared at me with anticipation and asked.

"Rather than us, will Onii-sama take childhood friend's side?"

That's going into extremes. It's not choosing one, both of sides are important... and in such case, the priority is given to the one who was first.

In the first place, Tomomi's request didn't have to be on 17th, right?

I mean, today too everyone had gone out leaving me behind...

They didn't intend to do it!

Made me wait in vain...

I was lonely, but it couldn't be helped!

I really wanted to chase after them...

The one who took on receiving of the package was me, right?

I endured it... because I'm onii-chan... and yet...

psht, something in the deeps of my heart snapped. Tension, responsibilities and obligations were twisted, childish desire bulged up and disrupted me from the inside, words have come out along with it.

"I've put up with today for everyone... so it's fine isn't it. Let me do what I want once in a while..."

Maybe these were the words of my true self I was always forcing down.

The moment I noticed that, the words that have leaked from my vessels have turned into regret.

Rather than say something so childish, I should have forced it down and kept it inside.

Like a dam collapsing starting with a small hole, if I let it out only once... what awaits, it's just a bad atmosphere.

The feeling I tasted long, long time ago——the awkwardness and regret after I troubled Grandpa and Grandma.

My fingertip was trembling. The disgust I had for myself had gradually increased.

At my words, Tomomi opened her eyes wide in shock.

"W-what's with that, Nii-chan! You don't have to put it that way, do you? Today too, everyone... for Nii-chan... and yet... Nii-chan you idiot!"

Not good. Even as I suppressed it, my lips moved by themselves.

"Who are you calling idiot."

"You're an idiot so I call you an idiot! Stupid, stuupid!"

"Are you a kid?!"

Tomomi and I glared at each other across the table. It seems like my brattiness was contagious and infected her.

Mika weakly muttered.

"Don't fightt."

Is this a sibling quarrel? No, wrong. I'm just arguing basing on my own rights. The one unreasonable is Tomomi.

"Refrain yourself a little, pay attention to the result. Suddenly calling me an idiot, you think blood wouldn't rush to my head?!"

Even I can get angry like an average person. I did... endure it, so that I don't clash with someone.

Tomomi made an angry expression and pursed her lips.

"I did intend provoking, you know? Nii-chan's angry? I'm angry too!"

"W-why would you be angry! You've gone, and had fun shopping right?"

"I didn't have fun! I had a proper objective! Could you stop blaming me like that?"

"B-blaming or not, it's the truth! Since you won't even say where did you go, it must be something you feel guilty about, isn't it?"

I said too much. Normally, I would have stepped on brakes here, but as if tumbling downhill, my words continued to accelerate for worse.

Her eyes filled with tears.

"I-it wasn't... I mean, today too we were shopping to prepare Nii-chan's birthday party, we went to choose gifts! It's a surprise so we couldn't tell you."

"...eh."

The blood that rushed to my head was drained.

Sayuri made a small nod in my direction.

"It's true. We wanted to make Onii-sama happy, so we proceeded with the plan in secret. To think... such a conflict in schedule would happen... As not to be noticed by Onii-sama today, everyone had pretended going separately. After going outside, we've been together the entire time."

デパートでお買い物
田宮世霊音
たみや　せれね
妹候補その1。
10月1日生まれの12歳。
天秤座B型ニート っ子。
日村友美
ひむら　ともみ
妹候補その2。
8月4日生まれの15歳。
獅子座O型勝負バカ。
三島小百合
みしま　さゆり
妹候補その5。
6月14日生まれの13歳。
双子座AB型マニュアル人間。

With tears in her eyes, Tomomi forced herself to smile.

"We wanted to surprise Nii-chan... and it's all gone to waste."

The inside of my head went white.

"That's... no way... is there? Sorry... um... what should I do?"

Tomomi glared at me as I faltered.

"Don't ask me! In the first place, just suspecting people, inquiring for reasons instead of thinking of our feelings... that's precisely why you never get serious about anything or like anyone!"

"...I...don't like anyone?"

Still embracing Mika who breathed roughly and hasn't calmed down yet, Yuuki spoke to me and Tomomi.

"Tomomi-chan, leave it at that. Come on, Nii-san too... okay?"

Impatient, Sayuri spoke quickly.

"U-umm! My opinion is the same as Tomomi-san's! Onii-sama should genuinely love. Uhh, mm... that's... uu, I can't put it well!"

It seems like she was confused. She probably hasn't expected the situation will become like this. Neither have I.

I... might be an empty person. The course of events made me play the role of onii-chan. I tried to behave like onii-chan... a fake.

Because I'm empty, I only focused on fulfilling the role of "onii-chan" inside of me.

But...

"Me too... I did put an effort. So that I can love you all. As not to be hated. Is that a bad thing? Is living as not to make any discord or friction between people wrong? By me breaking everything will be settled well!"

I couldn't choose just one of them. I had to treat them all equally.

While doing that, I did the best I could and yet...

Yuuki's eyes were sad.

"Nii-san. That's... not good. If you match the other person as not to be hated, won't you end up hurting them that way?"

"That's why I didn't say it. Not saying it I endured and made it so it's all forgotten. So far it's been working out well!"

Now that I think of it, even when I entered student council in the middle school it was because no one else was running in the elections. It wasn't that I wanted to join it. By chance I allowed myself to take that role and there was no one else. That's all. In that role, I might have overestimated myself thinking I have finally found something I feel is fun.

While it wasn't so at all.

Tomomi pointed at my face.

"Nii-chan is an always-escaping chicken bastard."

"What's wrong with being a coward! Until now like that... it's already too late, but seeing as myself thinks of how to smooth it over, I'm going to start hating myself."

Self-protection. That's my nature...

Nothing could be done, but still, I'm thinking on how to repair the relationship.

Regretfully.

Learning I have five little sisters and told to choose one, I didn't choose.

I didn't want to be hated by the little sisters I didn't chose. I didn't want to be resented. Even if they said they won't, I didn't believe it... escaping to my self-protection.

Choices like that have stacked up, leading to now. The situation I hated the most, I was bad with and escaped from, is all my own fault.

It might be a quarrel from which we could reconcile, but since I never quarrelled with anyone... I didn't know how to.

Selene who was silent up until now, muttered absent-mindedly.

"...because of my deception?"

"Deception ...?"

I ended up asking in response.

"...the package I asked Onii-chan to receive... umm..."

I somehow understood what Selene didn't say.

"You mean that. So that I don't go out and by chance don't encounter you in the city?"

She nodded lightly.

The one who set that up was Selene. But, I was deceived so that I don't notice them preparing for celebrating my birthday.

She said a lie while thinking about me.

No one had any intention of hurting anyone.

I know. I know that.

Still, even though my head knew, my emotions didn't keep up. In this situation, it was as if I was immune. Because I continued to avoid. Because I continued to escape.

Like this, I'm not fit to be the elder brother protecting his little sisters. I'm not suitable.

Once again, Selene confirmed.

"...because I lied to Onii-chan?"

"I didn't say that... just..."

I no longer had any confidence as a brother.

For a moment when I fell silent, Selene has seen through my heart.

"...if you don't like it so much, Onii-chan... how about you quit?"

She continued quietly.

"...if someone forces you, it's fine to refuse. We didn't know we were little sisters in the first place, neither that we had sisters. Onii-chan was raised as an only child. We aren't siblings. A group of only children. And yet, having eldest son or eldest daughter... if it's hard, you can just quit it."

Hearing Selene's words, Tomomi raised her reddened eyes.

"T-that's right, yeah! Quit being nii-chan! I'll quit being nee-chan too! Everyone disband and scatter!"

So us being siblings was impossible after all.

Because originally, we were more like strangers.

We were able to pretend to be a good family just because I met with them one by one, and we gathered only on weekends. Because we weren't too close to each other, there was no conflict.

Still... sooner or later, an incident would happen and we were fated to disband... no, it was destiny. No matter how much we struggle, the result won't change. It can't be changed.

The reason Murasaki-san said "Hurry up and decide on a single sister, if you don't you'll regret it", might have been because of this.

"That so! Fine then! I'll quit!"

Unable to remain on place, I stood up and then holed myself in my room.

That's right. I'll quit. I don't have to be onii-chan.

It's over. Disbanding. Dispersal.

It's not like I wanted to become onii-chan, I'm sick of the role forced on me. I don't care any more... what will be, will be.

13th of May, Monday.

Responsibility. Liberation. First Step Starting from Minus.

I didn't see any dream.

On Monday morning, I woke up all alone in my room.

The little sisters disappeared without a trace. The living room full of models and life living room and kitchen were empty, as if reflecting my empty heart.

I prepared myself and as usual, went to the school.

In the classroom before the morning homeroom, Mariko called out to me worried.

"It's nothing."

Like that, I dodged it.

While usually I looked forward to when lessons are over, now I wished they were prolonged even if just for a little longer. I was scared of going back.

After school, half way when going back home I separated from Mariko, sat down on a bench in children's park and was at a loss.

I couldn't enter my own room and the reason to go to Selene's was gone. I already quit being onii-chan. When I looked at the ground below me, a procession of ants headed to its nest.

I was envious of them, having a place to go back to.

From now on, for next week, where should I go back I wonder. Faced with this realistic problem, I was at a loss.

"...what are you doing in a place like this?"

Suddenly called out to, I flinched.

It was a girl's voice. Lacking intonation and clear like fresh water, it was familiar. However, I didn't feel any presence of someone approaching, so surprised, my heart started beating fast.

No, it can't be. Today is Monday, a weekday, it's difficult to even imagine her being here.

Possibly, it was just my hallucination. Hahaha. I no longer know what to do and finally, I started to hear voices of people who aren't here.

When I raised my head, a black-haired girl wearing a brand-new uniform stood there, with a student's bag in her hand she dazedly looked down at my face.

顔を上げると、
そこには黒髪の美少女が
真新しい制服に袖を通して、
学生カバンを手に
ぼんやりと俺の顔を
見下ろしていた。
「……こんなところで
なにをしてるんですか？」

The voice I heard was no hallucination, the figure that stood in front of me was no illusion.

"Selene... hey, is it really you, Selene?! That appearance, no way..."

"...I went to school."

Selene, who only ever lazed around, stretched her back. Her appearance in the uniform without a single wrinkle looked dignified.

"...is beside you, okay?"

"Y-yeah. It's fine."

She sat down next to me. Her face didn't turn in my direction, she just stared forward.

"What happened. Even going to school."

While squinting as if she stared in the distance, Selene spoke matter-of-factly.

"...I can no longer rely on Ex-onii-chan, so I'm doing best on my own. Next goal is making real friends at school. While certain someone is standing still, I shall pull ahead."

I recalled a certain phrase that was in the period drama's The Retirement Lord's opening.

I stopped and Selene started to walk. Or rather, I didn't stop but actually moved backwards.

Now, even without me there, Selene is splendidly walking on her own feet.

She no longer needs me.

"Ex... huh. So you will no longer call me 'onii-chan' will you."

"...indeed."

"Why are you here Selene?"

"...the park is a public place. Rather than that, why are you here?"

Something about her way of speaking was quite grown-up. Being referred to as "you", I once again realized we have become strangers.

In the first place we were something like strangers, but when I was called "onii-chan", there was always some familiarity between Selene and me.

"I'm here in the park... because I'm no longer onii-chan, I thought just entering freely into your room is not good."

"...refraining?"

"It's consideration. Rather, talking like this too, is a little awkward."

"...is that so?"

"It is! Yesterday, something like that happened..."

"...sibling quarrels, aren't something unusual."

"That's wasn't a sibling quarrel, was it. Somehow my onii-chan pretence was peeled off. And everyone was disillusioned. In the first place, wasn't it Selene who said 'stop being brother' wasn't it."

My way of speaking ended up being harsh. Why would you forced your unstable emotions on Selene, really... me.

"...I said it's fine to quit, that's all. If Onii-chan wishes for it, it's fine not to quit."

After saying so, Selene opened her eyes wide and shook her head lightly.

"...just now... me saying onii-chan... forget that."

"Y-yeah.. um... that's..."

Momentarily, Selene's face turned red. Because of her fair complexion, it was easy to tell the change. As I remained silent, unable to endure the silence, Selene muttered with a prideful voice, mixing it with her sigh.

"...as I thought... it's impossible..."

Her shoulders trembled lightly.

"...school is scary, school is super scary... I don't think I'll make any friends... I'll die... rather, please kill me, ease my pain."

"A-are you okay, Selene?!"

Just what happened? The refreshing Selene turned into someone else... or more like, she turned back, she stooped like back when I first met her.

"...you are amazing. Going to school every day."

"Rather than amazing, isn't that normal?"

"...it's not normal. There's lots of unknown people, they're those classmates right? I'm suddenly being welcomed by others from class? I have to get along with people I don't know. It's impossible."

Ever since Selene enrolled in the middle school, she was holed up in her room the entire time and didn't even go to the entrance ceremony.

"Classmates usually don't know each other from before, they're all strangers to each other from the start aren't they?"

"...it might be so... but isn't."

Somehow, I managed to understand what Selene meant. She might have fallen into a situation like that of an out-of-season transfer student.

"W-well... I see. You had a late start by a month, forming groups of people getting along and such must have ended long ago, in April. It must be painstaking for a newcomer to enter one of those."

Me of now was also similar. I was treated like something similar to tumour in the class.

"...my mind suffers Full-Body Complex Pulverization Exhaustion Fracturing."

"That's severe."

"...everyone was staring at me."

"By everyone, you mean both boys and girls?"

"...yes. I got nervous from being stared at. I'm not a freak show."

"That's... everyone is curious about you. Don't they want to get along with you?"

Selene made a distant expression and tilted her head.

"...I don't think so."

"You weren't bullied or treated badly by someone... were you?"

"...I wasn't."

"Did you feel like you're being ignored?"

"...I wanted to be left alone, but they were glancing at me or speaking to me."

"For example what were they talking about to you?"

"...about family, where I live, what shampoo I use... it felt like a compressed interview done by a group, I was so nervous I couldn't speak up."

I ended up letting out a sigh of relief in my mind.

Selene's appearance had some fragility in it, she was a mysterious beauty. The inside was disappointing, but that difference also made her cute... heck, what am I thinking here.

Anyway, because she's a beautiful girl, it can't helped her classmates were curious about her.

I confirmed with Selene, who faced downwards.

"Speaking of which, what about the reason for leave of absence for entire month?"

"...Murasaki-san written an application saying I was sick..."

"I see. So she made preparations so that you can go to school whenever you get motivated."

"...it's impossible. Surrounded by so many people... I'll die. From tomorrow onwards, I'll normally return to being hikikomori."

"It's too early to declare retirement. Also, if it's you of now it'll be all right."

"...it's not all right. Onii-ch... you're no longer with me."

"You're a completely different person from the Selene I met. You decided on your own to go to school and was able to go there. What I did, was to help you a little making starting point. You are the one who did your best."

"...u-uu..."

"Also, who cares about twenty or thirty classmates. Compared to Cicada-san's number of followers, it's nothing."

Selene suddenly opened her eyes wide.

"...is... that so?"

"Indeed. Isn't it fine to think of it as of having the number of your followers increase by thirty?"

She slowly nodded.

Before I realized, I once again started the consultation with Selene on her life. Not as her brother this time, but as the senior in being afloat the class... let's make it that.

"...as I thought, it's impossible without Onii-chan. I want to rely on you but..."

Burying her face in my chest, Selene clung onto me tightly.

Yesterday I declared that I quit, but my hand...

By itself... headed towards Selene's head and...

〈Pat her〉

I ended up patting her head. I can't stop. I gently hugged Selene back.

"You did well, Selene."

With her head still stuck in my chest, Selene shook her head lightly to the sides.

"...no such thing. Onii-chan was there so..."

"I'm... a no-good human that isn't qualified to be called 'onii-chan'."

She slowly raised her head.

"...I'm no-good as well, so as no-good duo, let's get along."

"Aren't you angry? I quit being onii-chan and threw it all away you know?"

Selene shook her head sideways again.

"...I still don't mind. Also, since I'm a no-good human too, I can somewhat understand the-same-type Onii-chan's feelings a little. I don't want to be a burden to Onii-chan. That's why, if it's hard on Onii-chan, I thought it's fine to quit... it's not that I hate Onii-chan."

"It makes me happy to be told that, but I quit being onii-chan and chose Mariko? I'm disqualified from being onii-chan."

As a result, it ended up like that, but rather than my little sisters, I picked Mariko.

"...Onii-chan chose that while thinking of himself so I'm going to respect that. While Onii-chan said the reason for that choice was self-defence and compromise, but still, you thought and distressed over it, then splendidly made your choice."

Not the reasons, but the decision itself is important... is what she means.

She downcast her eyes and continued.

"...after that, when Onii-chan locked himself in his room, Tomomi-chan was in terrible state."

"Tomomi was?"

"She was very depressed, and said this."

Instead of Tomomi herself, Selene repeated her words.

"I felt like finally asking Nii-chan for his real feelings. He always seemed like he's refraining himself somehow. I thought that if I get him angry he'll get serious. And yet, after cornering him, I've gone too far to back out. I'm... an idiot."

I should have known Tomomi had that kind of personality. Rather, it was me who fell for simply being called an "idiot". I'm such an idiot!

"...Onii-chan. I don't think anyone started hating Onii-chan. But, that's just my own impression, meeting them... it might be the last time, but I think... it's better to talk with them properly."

"So, you're saying I should go to everyone's room again starting from tomorrow?"

"...yes."

"I don't know what should I talk about. More than that, I have no confidence we can reconcile..."

"...there's no need to reconcile. At the time, just act accordingly to how you feel and just honestly say what's on your mind. Before Onii-chan does something, he thinks too much."

"So without fearing the result, just go and do it, huh."

"...if you think that it won't get any worse, even if you hurt them by being honest, you can just give up. It might be your last chance to say what's really on your mind."

It sounded extreme, but it was just as Selene said. There was no longer any need to restrain the part of me that doesn't want to be hated.... I mean, having to go that far to be honest, I'm pathetic even if I say so myself.

"Yeah. It's just as you say."

She nodded, then stood up from the bench. After turning towards me, she quietly reached out with her hand.

"...Onii-chan. There's somewhere I want to go. Please come with me."

"Right now?"

"...yes."

Not confirming where are we going, I took Selene's hand and stood up.

Pulled by hand by Selene we rode a bus, then arrived at the nearest station.

The sewing store that was in one of the station's buildings seemed to be Selene's "place I want to go".

Lined up on the wide and bright floor were several large rolls of cloth.

There was also a corner with sewing machines and knitting supplies. Even for an untrained eye, it was quite the line-up.

Compared to the size of this floor, there was very few people in here. While I thought that's bad for the store owners, for Selene who felt better outside the crowds, it was good that it was quite deserted.

"Selene, is there anything you want to buy?"

"...not in particular."

"You came here without having any?"

"....."

Selene fell silent. It feels kind of awkward.

As I looked around us, I found something interesting.

"O-oh. Look, there's corner with fittings. Amazing... they even sell parts for purses. Also, there are belt buckles in there. If you use it with chosen cloth or leather you can make whatever belt you like."

"...de-deen... Onii-chan... out."

Indifferently, Selene declared

"What on earth is that 'de-deen'..."

"...it's Do Not Laugh Series."

Ahh, certainly, every year when the end of the year comes it appears in TV. It's a counter-program for national festival, when the participants laugh hearing set-up story, their butt get slapped with slapstick...

plap!

And so, my butt was slapped by Selene.

"H-hey, Selene! It didn't hurt but... what are you doing all of a sudden?!"

Looking from the outset, a high school boy getting spanked by a younger girl... even if there's few customers, there's a clerk on the floor, it was incredibly embarrassing.

"...it's because Onii-chan was 'out'."

"Even if I was, just now... did I do something to you?"

"...de-deen... Onii-chan... out."

"Eh? Wa- wait, Selene..."

plap!

Once again, Selene delivered punishment to my butt.

Just what is this... Anyway, it seems like Selene suddenly turned moody. I need to do something...

"T-that's right, Selene! Since we're at the station, how about we go to take a look at Nippori... or something?"

She energetically shook her head.

"...if we go now, by the time we get there, the stores will close."

"I see. That's a shame. Umm... then, let's take a look around this store."

"....."

Once again, Selene fell silent.

"Are you interested in knitting? There's lots of colourful wool!"

"...de-deen... Onii-chan... out."

slap!

I proposed, but it was irrational. If I were a person who's happy when spanked by little sister, it would be a reward. But, I'm not! I'm aboslutely not! I mean, we're in public.

Ah, no... it's not like I would hesitate if we're alone behind closed doors.

Heck, what excuses I'm making here.

"Hey, Selene! Why am I 'out' the entire time?! If you don't stop that, even I'll get angry."

"...Onii-chan... safe..."

"He??"

Selene stretched on her legs, stretched her hand and pat my head.

This is... am I being praised for now?

"Answer my question properly."

"...yes. Go on."

Go on... what. It can't be helped, let's ask again.

"Uhh, well... for a while now, Selene didn't come to the sewing store because you wanted to buy something, then you started judging me for what I say and spank me, then suddely judged me safe. First, I don't know what are criteria for that. What should I do to be safe... no, I don't care if it's safe. Tell me what to do not to be 'out'."

"...de-deen... Onii-chan... infinitely close to grey... out."

slap!

There was no power in the slaps delivered by Selene's slender hands, but the clerk and customers noticed us acting irresponsible. Their stares hurt.

But, just now she purposely added "infinitely close to grey" didn't she.

"....."

Again, Selene fell silent. She just stood there dazedly.

Hmm. I wonder. Are these Selene's whims?

I... decided to watch in silence.

For now, it seemed like it would be out no matter what I say.

"......?"

Selene stared at my face in silence, then tilted her head like a little squirrel.

"...Onii-chan?"

"W-what's up, Selene?"

"...nothing."

"Why nothing!"

I ended up retorting. For a split second I covered my ass with both hands to protect it.

But, Selene didn't do anything. As if ignoring me, she walked to the corner with decorative buttons and started looking through them. Maybe because she liked them, from the small shelf of a drawer she took out two buttons.

"Found something good?"

"...this and... this..."

A decorative button, like a brooch with a blue stone and a big decorative button with a milky white shell.

"Both of them look beautiful."

Honestly, it was hard to say which one is better.

O-oops. Once again, I ended up acting carelessly.

It's something I heard from Mariko before, but when women pick up two goods, they're not wondering about which to take, their answer is already decided and they are fine with either. Having someone care about them and chose for them made them happy.

Rather than look for a correct answer, I ended up vaguely saying that both are fine.

"....."

Selene remained silent.

Hmm, I still can't tell the conditions for "de-deen".

In that case, I can only try various things and watch her reactions.

I don't know how many times was I slapped, after several times, I found a visible trend among the correct answers.

"U-umm... wasn't it 'out' just now?"

"...de-deen... Onii-chan... out."

slap!

"Uwahh! Why with this timing! If it was a choice of two, I'd understand it's out when I fail!"

"...Onii-chan. Choices and such... it's not a game of life."

She muttered absent-mindedly, then returned the decorated buttons she had in hands to the drawer.

"Hey, Selene. What did you want to do for a while now?"

"...shopping."

No, well, we've come to a store so that's normal...

"Didn't you say there's nothing in particular you want to buy at first?"

"...if there's a bargain, then within the limits of that."

I can't understand at all.

Installed along the passage outside of the store, there was a break space for customers. There were vending machines and benches.

The moment they entered my field of view, naturally, words leaked out of my mouth.

"Haa... got it. I'll sit there on the bench, call out to me when you're done."

And I ended up saying my real intentions. Honestly, even though the cloth and decorative buttons looked beautiful, to me myself looking at them wasn't that fun.

"....."

Selene nodded in response to my words. Eh? It isn't 'out'?

"Umm... is that fine, Selene? Can I really take a break? Is it really okay?"

"...de-dee..."

"I'll take a break. I will do it. I'm off!"

Before Selene could finish "de-deen", I fled to the break space with the bench.

And then, Selene started to move more actively than when I was beside her. She concentrated similarly to how she does when she works in the room with sewing machine.

Concentrates?

Ah... maybe... when I was with her, I was in the way of shopping?

Then she didn't have to come here with me, did she. If she came to the store alone... heck, that might have been difficult for Selene.

But, in that case she could have told me about it.

...I want to concentrate at looking for goods, so please take a break there... or something.

After about twenty minutes, Selene finished looking through the goods and in the end, came back without buying anything.

"Welcome back, Selene."

"...yes."

Somehow, it was as difficult to approach her as it was when we first met. Can it be, that it was actually better for me to stay with her, and was angry in secret for not shopping with her... or something?

I stood up from the bench and asked her.

"Can it be, that you are angry that I took a brea..."

"...de-deen... Onii-chan... out."

slap!

When I stood up, once again Selene's slap burst into my butt.

"H-hey! Cut it out already!"

"......?"

Without fear, Selene curiously stared at my face.

I thought she's a difficult to grasp girl in the first place, but today's Selene is really strange.

Recently, I thought I finally understood Selene, but it must have been my one-sided assumption.

"...does Onii-chan too, want to spank me?"

"Why would it come to that?! No wait. You said 'too', does that mean you slapped my butt because you wanted to?"

"....."

It can't be, that she got offended by my provocation...

"Umm... Selene. Maybe... are you trying to make me angry? That's not very like you, or rather... no, it would fit Tomomi perfectly! Better not to tell her that."

Selene stared directly at me. Her pupils like jewels, remained silent as if appealing to me.

She was serious. That seriousness... there was no doubt.

What did I miss?"

Right now, she remained silent, as if waiting for my answer.

I recalled the times when it was 'out'.

The purse metal fittings corner. Knitting. Did I do something to her? I asked. I confirmed if it wasn't out.

When I pressed on her to confirm if it's okay to take a break, Selene nearly called an 'out'.

And when I asked her if she's angry for me taking a break... I was mindful of her.

Yeah, that's right. All of it... I made sure to mind Selene.

She might have felt that.

That's why when I let out my real feelings, she didn't call 'out'.

"Can it be, that when I'm mindful of you, that you call 'out'?"

I asked while minding her expression as hard as I could. For an instant, she made a surprised expression and raised her head.

"...de-deen... Onii-chan... out."

slap!

It seems like I wasn't wrong.

Then, what was it when she called safe just once.

Certainly, I said "If you don't stop that, even I'll get angry".

Getting angry, would be my own feelings. Not something... from refraining for the sake Selene, my own feeling.

Yeah, I feel like I understand. She wanted to remind me.

But, what should she do to make me understand it well? No, don't think of it. It's because you think of it like this, that you start minding others all the time.

"Selene. Hitting your onii-chan is bad thing, right? Please reflect on it."

Hearing my words, she opened her eyes wide. Then, she lowered her head.

"...yes, I shall. I'm sorry."

"Very well."

"...um, Onii-chan... is that all?"

Selene muttered anxiously. There wasn't enough words, there were times where I had to add complimentary words and translate it

But, I quit it. In the end, that's all Selene said. Of course, I should do it if necessary, but there was no need to match Selene all the time.

"That's all."

"...that's unlike Onii-chan."

"Unlike me? No such thing. More importantly, I've gotten hungry, how about we head back?"

Though Selene might not necessarily be hungry, I am hungry now. Rather than waiting for other's reaction, it's fine from time to time to request something myself. Surely, it was what Selen wanted me to notice... no, definitely.

I felt like that was it, so I have decided so.

"...I'm hungry."

"All right. Let's go home then!"

I stretched out my hand. Selene gently gripped it in return.

Holding hands, we started walking side by side.

"Rather than eating then going home, it's better to do it in your room. Let's buy something in convenience store and go back."

"...as Onii-chan commands."

If they have an objection I'll listen to it, but being mindful of others more than usual is unneeded, isn't it. Also, with my little sister... family, even more so.

As we headed for the bus station, Selene spoke as if she remembered something. Without any prelude, she asked something important.

"...Onii-chan... about Friday."

"Y-yeah... you prepared haven't you, for birthday party."

"...is Onii-chan going to childhood friends, Mariko-chan's home?"

Let's answer honestly. Worrying about Selene... I gave up on that, for today, it was enough looking for an answer for which I'm not hated.

"I intend to."

She slowly nodded.

"...okay. Onii-chan has become honest. Rather than mind others, you were able to decide properly. I think you did well."

Selene knew how weak I was. Knowing someone's weakness, she could sympathize me.

And tried to make me realize it.

I was really glad to have Selene with me. I thought so from the depths of my heart.

14th of May, Tuesday.

Impact. Attack. No-Guard Exchange of Blows.

I thought as we ate home-made lunch together during the lunch break.

Mariko seemed happy. Even if she didn't say anything, I could tell from the atmosphere.

I should have been happy with her as well, but as if I was trying to swim with weights, my mood was sinking. That's why, as if to struggle, I tried being merry.

Mariko said "you seem strange?", suspicious.

As not to show I'm depressed, I forcibly smiled... but it was seen through by her. In that case, I should have acted depressed from the start, there was me who thought that.

Once again, I ended up minding others. While I could be honest with my little sister, Selene, I couldn't do so with Mariko. I was pathetic for not being able to.

I thought I didn't want her to worry, but I ended up making her worry anyway, thinking I was a troublesome guy having others pay attention to me, I didn't want to be thought of as annoying and disliked.

Not for someone else, for myself.

I tried asking Mariko.

"Do you have anyone you could tell anything, like, what you really think or feel?"

Mariko made a troubled expression, but answered properly. "Yup. Family, I guess..."

That was surely not something that was there from the start, but something cultivated over long time as she lived with her family, I thought.

While I thought there's also a need of refrain and consideration with family, I felt envious of Mariko's family, to whom she could tell anything.

After school, I erased my will and headed for Tomomi's room.

Meeting her for the first time after the quarrel, was hard.

The day before yesterday too, it seems like Tomomi too wanted me to speak honestly.

After that though, we collided with each other and broke.

I rang on the interphone and put my hand on the doorknob.

Because I experienced being locked out by a chain lock, I was extra cautious.

When I gently pulled on the doorknob, the door opened without the chain getting in the way.

I breathed out in relief.

The door opened, but Tomomi didn't come to the entrance.

My leg carried me from the front door to the living room.

Tomomi waited for me to come in. Her gaze focused on me. Anger was mixed in with her stare.

Now, facing her like this, I didn't know what to do. At loss, I spoke as if to run away.

"Um, s-sorry. The day before yesterday, I didn't act like older brother. That's why, um... I apologize."

"I won't accept such an artificial apology at all. And so, I absolutely won't forgive it."

"Then, what should I do?"

Standing upright she folded her arms, relaxing her mouth in a grin, Tomomi declared.

"Nii-chan. If you want to have a lovelove birthday party with Mariko-chan, you have to beat me first!"

If you want to proceed, you have to defeat me first...

"Are you a game character or what?"

"Anyway, let's have a match, Nii-chan!"

She pointed energetically at my face.

"No way, you're not going to say we decided it with a game, right?"

"In a game Nii-chan has no chance! That's why, it's a match in arguing. Dare persuading me."

"Even if you tell me to..."

With an irritated expression, Tomomi glared at me.

"The battle has already begun. If you're not attacking, I will! No chickening out, Nii-chan! Holing up in your room just because it turned into a quarrel, you're too sissy!"

"I thought that if I stay there, atmosphere will get even stranger... it was my consideration as older brother!"

"Consideration? Don't make me laugh. You won't admit you ran away and still say it's consideration?"

"Yeah, I ran away, I escaped! Back then I didn't want to hurt or be hurt any more!"

"Thinking the family would break up with just that much, what a brat. Being unable to stand up after stumbling just once, is Nii-chan that weak?"

"That one time was fatal. Yet today, you're adding an insult to the injury?"

"If you lie on the ground and wait for someone to save you, I'll kick you like this!"

Tomomi showed me some practice swings of low kicks on spot. She must have been familiar with martial arts, as they were unexpectedly sharp.

"Kicking someone's who's fell over, aren't you a savage."

"It's Nii-chan's fault!"

"Yeah, it's my fault. It was my fault!"

Suddenly, anger disappeared from Tomomi's expression.

"I'm saying that's what's bad."

"W-what now..."

Staring at me with a lonely look, she continued.

"When you need help, say 'help me' properly..."

She wanted to hear my true feelings, since she deliberately said things to provoke me, I felt like I heard her real feelings.

"Sorry... not. Thanks Tomomi. For worrying about me."

"S-stupid! I'm not!"

Blushing, her voice sounded weird.

Then she pointed at me and shouted.

"If you're going to blame me with embarrassment, I'll use my trump card! So, in the end, childhood friend Mariko-chan is... Nii-chan's what?"

What's "blaming with embarrassment. Also, why is she asking about Mariko now.

I could tell my face suddenly turned hot.

"W-what you ask, I met her again after a long time... just a childhood friend."

Proceeding a step forward, Tomomi peered into my face in wonder. She was at a distance where I could feel her breath, though.

"Really just that? For such a reason she's making you a lunch box every day? Would just a childhood friend whom you didn't meet for years, remember your birthday and want to celebrate it?"

I ended up turning my face away. Tomomi took my face in both her hands and turned it towards her, she spoke with a just a little of tears in her eyes.

"That's definitely, because she... likes Nii-chan."

I've made it so that I don't think of that, ever. The sense of distance I have with Mariko now was comfortable, I was scared of approaching her any closer, moving away from her... was even more scary.

"The l-lunch box is 'cause Mariko said she wants to practice cooking, um... rather than going out... I'm the guinea pig! I'm disposal unit of her creative cuisine!"

"Houhou... go on, c'mon? By the way Nii-chan, what's the favourite home cooking of Mariko-chan's?"

Her cooking was mostly delicious, but if I were to name one it would be fried chicken and fried eggs.

Heck, at this rate I'll be fully dragged into Tomomi's pace.

"Why do you ask me such a thing!"

"Obviously, because I'm curious what kind of a girl is Mariko-chan!"

"It has nothing to do with Tomomi, right?"

"It does. Nii-chan said he's quit being nii-chan, but for me, whether he stops or not... Nii-chan is still Nii-chan after all."

Troubled she raised her eyebrows and made an embarrassed smile.

"I didn't think I'd fall in unrequited love with Nii-chan. For normal siblings, that absolutely wouldn't happen."

Ugh... somehow... that was cute. Rather, being told that I'm so embarrassed I feel like dying.

"Unrequited love... does that mean you want me to continue with my older brother's role?"

"Tt-t-th-that's right! Even without saying you're in brother's role, you're my older brother himself."

"Didn't you tell me to quit?"

"I did! If Nii-chan doesn't want to, I won't force you. But to me, Nii-chan will always, always, be Nii-chan. That's why... it's unrequited love. Unrequited love telling me I want Nii-chan to be Nii-chan! Be nii-chan! I won't say that, but I can feel that way towards Nii-chan, right?"

As she turned red up till her ears, Tomomi's voice trembled. Being told it that way, is honestly troubling.

"D-doing whatever you please aren't you."

"Having unrequited love is everyone's freedom. T-that's why, I'm curious about what kind of girl is Nii-chan's girlfriend! As a little sister, of course!"

My face turned hot like infra-red heater.

"I told you she's not my girlfriend!"

"If you're not going out, it's Mariko-chan's unrequited love. That means, on Nii-chan's birthday there might be a pattern where Mariko-chan confesses you know?"

"What's with that fictious development."

"As if you could say that! Getting a huge inheritance, five little sisters, being confessed to by a childhood friend, and to top it all your birthday present is my-se-lf. Kind of thing... isn't that eroge?!"

Damn. I can't refute.

"When I became Taishido, thinking there's an inheritance lying around, Mariko used the fact she was a childhood friend and aiming for it, got closer to me. You can consider it that way too, can't you."

Saying it myself, I felt the worst.

"So, Mariko-chan is a bad woman?"

"Just now, it was only one of possibilities. As close as possible to zero... heck, I said it, but it's practically impossible."

Limited to Mariko, it was impossible.

"Then then, so Mariko-chan is a cute girl and likes Nii-chan?"

"Why did it turn out like that!"

"Nii-chan's face's red.'

"This is... b-because I'm angry. You're provoking me aren't you?"

"I'm not. I'm just doing what's called confirming your real relation. So, Nii-chan, what do you think of Mariko-chan?"

"You ask me... a good childhood friend..."

"If Mariko-chan was to say "make me your girlfriend", what would Nii-chan do?"

"W-wwhat I do is just my business right?"

"It's not. If she becomes Nii-chan's girlfriend, in other words, I'll be her nee-chan in law, right?"

"Haa?"

"Nii-chan quit being nii-chan, but in my feelings that's how it'll be!"

"Don't be unreasonable."

"Being unreasonable is fineee."

Tomomi responded in monotone voice. Don't drag it out!

"Woah... that way of talking pisses me off."

"I intended to piss you offff. C'mon, what if Mariko-chans wraps her body with ribbons and hugs you, saying 'happy birthday Yoichi-kun!', what happens to Nii-chan? Become riajuu? Gonna explode? You'll die?"

Ugh... for an instant, I imagined Mariko's immodest appearance.

"Tomomi... just where did you find such dangerous information."

"Yafoo answers. There's a girl who makes a lunch box for Nii-chan every day, is it love? And that topic ended up with 1000 responses."

"STOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOPPPPPPPPPPPPPPPP!"

"It's anonymous so it's fine, isn't it. By the way, fishing out from the storm I summarized the public opinion, without a doubt it's true love, thank you... and so. A net celebrity 'Undying Cicada' wrote it's '200% certain'."

Even Selene... it's likely someone impersonated her, but the possibility it was her was high. Tomomi's attack on me did not loosen.

"So so, what about before you met again? Tell me about times as kids.'"

"W-why?"

"Asking about Nii-chan's past is twice as delicious. Or maybe you did something bad you can't say? Like going around with a metal bat destroying windows in school or destroying basket hoop with a dunk!"

"What kind of problem child is that! As if I'd do that!"

"Well, for sure you have one or two, three or four things you can't say. Maybe you wet the bed until third grade of elementary school."

"I didn't!"

It was until second grad... heck, it's not time to dig up my privates.

"If you want to silence me, you have confess obediently!'

Tomomi stared at me seriously.

Silence, the room was dead calm.

After one beat, I coughed and answered.

"Fine. It might be long so let's sit down."

As I sat down on the sofa, Tomomi brought two 500ml PET bottles with cola from the refrigerator in the kitchen.

I received one and started talking about my memories of Mariko.

That said, there was nothing special to say.

At that time Mariko was taller than me, like onee-chan... that kind of story.

In the first place, Mariko had a little sister Chitose-chan so I think she was used to acting like onee-chan. After that... when we were choosing groups for field trip and I failed to get in one, she invited me. Also... uhh, umm...

Before the talk about basics was over, it was already past seven in the evening.

I've had even more memories of various episodes with Mariko than I thought.

When Tomomi finished listening, she slowly exhaled.

"So Mariko-chan, since long time ago was someone like onee-chan."

"T-that's right. She's good at caring for others. Even now, she looks after me as an extension of that. That's why it's not really love..."

"That so? Maybe she won't tell you that directly because she's concerned about Nii-chan? Well, I don't know if it's true though."

She raised her arms and muttered while stretching.

Bomb!

"So she's someone Nii-chan can talk so much about... that Mariko-chan."

Tomomi threw the emptied PET bottle into the trash.. Like a basketball's free throw, the bottle entered right in.

"It's not something that happened just recently. How about you disappear, stuuupid."

She showed me an akanbe.

After that she laughed making fun of me. Still, somehow, the look in her eyes felt lonely.

But she kept smiling.

As not to make me worry. Brave. Firm.

At the same time I felt Tomomi dear to me, strangely I forgave her.

Confiding my feelings to Tomomi like this, I feel like my heart has gotten lighter.

Surely, if not for Tomomi, I wouldn't be able to let my true feelings clash with someone.

I felt like she shared with me her courage for not to fearing being hurt.

15th of May, Wednesday.

Hope. Wish. Pure Desire.

Two days until the birthday.

When I turn sixteen, Mariko will be temporarily younger.

Mariko said "From now on, I should call you 'onii-chan' right?", she poked fun at me.

Back in elementary school she was taller than me, so even though I was older Mariko treated me as if I was younger.

By the way, it seems like Mariko is a Libra, born on 10th of October. And so, she was seriously considering calling me 'onii-chan' until October—— or so.

When I politely refused, Mariko said "You're more energetic than you were yesterday, aren't you?" and gently smiled, her smile was like sunlight shining through the foliage.

After the school day ended, I separated from Mariko and came home.

Once in front of Sayuri's room, I took a deep breath.

I wonder, what does Sayuri think about me quitting being her older brother.

To Sayuri, rather than being siblings... being lovers or... anyway, she wants a relationship beyond siblings with me. That's why, me quitting as her brother might not have much relation to it.

If anything, having her say "we are released from the yoke of the ethics" worried me more.

I didn't prepare anything. Even if I did a solid preparation, one unexpected event could make the plan collapse, that happened often. Faltering the plan fails happens as well.

Ehh, to hell with it. It's inevitable. Whatever happens, happe⁓ens.

When I rang the interphone, the door opened.

Since Sayuri didn't jump out to meet me, does it mean she's angry after all?

When I headed to the living room, she stretched her back. She was waiting for me in seiza.

There was a blackout applied on Kyuu-chan's cage. The atmosphere in the room was somehow stagnant, heavy and wrapping around me.

Sayuri raised her face and stared at me intently.

"Sit down first, Onii-sama."

"S-sure."

Today, Sayuri's appearance was a cardigan and skirt with very bland colours, the impression lack of frills gave me was similar to how she was when I first met her.

"I have something to speak of with Onii-sama."

"W-what is it?"

Swallowed up by her tone of voice, I started speaking formally.

"Please marry me."

"Ehh...?!"

"Please marry me and let's become family. For little sisters please select Mika-san."

"What are you bringing up all of a sudden!"

"I'm serious. If you do so, everyone will become family."

This is what Sayuri had come up with, the answer for the relationship with me.

Ultimately just for argument's sake, if I married Sayuri, her sisters would become my sisters in law. That's why, everyone will become family... or so.

If we pretend Sayuri and I aren't connected by blood, everything would settle peacefully.

She continued, her voice trembling.

"That's why... on Friday... please don't go there."

With tears in her eyes, Sayuri appealed to me.

"Don't go you mean... to Mariko's home?"

"That's right! I won't acknowledge Mariko-san. That's m-m-mmy place. I love Onii-sama! I love Onii-sama a lot! I really, really love you dearly."

Her shoulders trembled, it seemed like she'd burst into tears any moment now.

I want to protect her. I want to fulfil Sayuri's wishes. But...

No matter how much she seeks me, I can't respond to her feelings.

Sayuri was my little sister.

"Sayuri and I are siblings, aren't we?"

"But hasn't Onii-sama said he quit being older brother. In that case, Onii-sama and I... our relation is that of a man and a woman! Before a brother and sister, we're a man and woman!"

"Man and woman you..."

"It's stamen and pistil!"

Trembling like a small dog, Sayuri continued to appeal to me.

"I too... like Sayuri. Even though that kind of thing happened on Sunday, this doesn't change even now."

Her expression brightened.

"Then, Onii-sama will make me his wife, right? I'll study a lot, do my best with cooking, as not to let anyone complain, I'll become a perfect girl fitting Onii-sama! I'll become Onii-sama's ideal girl, I'll do put my utmost effort to meet all Onii-sama's wishes and desires. If only Onii-sama loves me, I don't need anything else."

I stared back at Sayuri.

"I like you, but not in romantic sense. As family... since we're siblings, I love you as my little sister."

Doing anything and everything for me... isn't that weird. If she matched everything to my liking, there wouldn't be any Sayuri left. Not needing anything but me, I want Sayuri to have various happy experiences... is that really fine, Sayuri?

As she said she loves me so far, it felt as if Sayuri tried to become a sacrifice. In the "love" she said so far, I could feel the scent of the sense of duty to protect her sisters.

That sense of duty, Sayuri's original personality and aspirations, it felt like that all was crushing her.

Hearing my refusal, she shook her head lightly.

"What should I do, that you love me as a girl?"

"There's nothing, it's impossible!"

"If I... wasn't Onii-sama's little sister, would Onii-sama fall in love with me? Even if Onii-sama didn't have inheritance, and didn't suddenly get little sisters... if Onii-sama was just a high school student in the high school I enter... if I confessed that I love Onii-sama, would you... love me?"

If that really was the case, the possibility I could have accepted Sayuri... was undeniable. If I didn't notice we're actually siblings.

But, we met because our position as siblings.

What should I do to make Sayuri understand without hurting her.

No, that's not enough. I won't change anything if I continue as I was until now.

Tomomi taught me, hasn't she?

Since we change, we can't be afraid of hurting each other.

In order to understand each other, we need to let out true feelings collide.

I need to respond to Sayuri's feelings, I need to tell her clearly.

Current Sayuri tried to sacrifice herself, thinking of her sisters.

It seems like Sayuri herself didn't realize herself. What meaning is there to happiness you trick yourself for?

I breathed in and confronted Sayuri.

"Even if you weren't my little sister... I think you would seem like a little sister to me. A very brave, working hard for my sake, a cute junior who feels like a little sister."

From the corners of Sayuri's eyes, transparent drops have dripped along her cheek and fell down.

"Can I only be a little sister to Onii-sama? Whenever Onii-sama wishes for it, I shall give up my body. Please satisfy your desires with me, Onii-sama!"

She took off the cardigan she wore, putting a finger on the shirt Sayuri moved closer from the seiza posture. And, she let out a quiet scream.

"Hauaa!"

Retaining the momentum, Sayuri pushed down and covered me. As I received her, she spoke while crying.

"My legs have gone numb. Onii-sama, it's your chance? The female middle schooler who can't move is closing on Onii-sama asking to be eaten! Won't you shake your stick? Rather, if the stick is being cheerful, there will be no second chance."

"A girl shouldn't be talking so vulgar!"

"Vulgarity will fix itself in time!"

Fix it now! Seriously, her acting erotically from time to time was also a problem. This Sayuri.

While in close contact, Sayuri locked my legs with hers.

Furthermore, she sandwiched my torso between her legs in intimate contact.

"Onii-sama. This is... um..."

Sayuri's breathing turned rough.

"My entire legs are numb. With my legs numb I have caught Onii-sama. Like this, even if I wanted to resist, I couldn't. Even if I'm messed up by Onii-sama... I-I think it can't be helped."

Anyway, to talk with her properly, I need to resolve myself. Recently, I feel like the time I have to resolve myself when dealing with Sayuri has shortened.

"Argh. Fine then, I'll mess you up!"

I embraced Sayuri's body, using my abdominal muscles I raised her body and after sitting down face to face with her, I pushed her down. From there on, I took initiative and moved.

"Hauu... finally, the moment I shall join together with Onii-sama has come."

"I won't be going easy on you."

I gently touched her ankle, my hands slowly raised up to her calves... and I raised them all at once.

"———?!!"

Sayuri let out a soundless scream. Holding calves of Sayuri's both legs in my hands, I started rubbing them single-mindedly. As I massaged her numb legs, she stretched her toes, her entire body convulsed.

"Aa, aaa, aahh!! Onii-sama! I'll come! I'll end up coming!"

"Stop letting out a strange voice!!"

After rubbing her enough, I pointed Sayuri's toes upwards and slowly stretched them out. By doing so I caused her leg to cramp. When I finished stretching her both legs, Sayuri exhaled slowly from her stomach.

"Onii-sama... toying with me..."

"It was just a leg massage. Like this the numbness in your feet will go away, and we can talk without being distracted, right?"

"It might be so but... why won't Onii-sama eat me? Even in secret is fine. Try tasting first and consider it."

"Ethically, as a person, I can't do that."

"Let's go to the world without ethics! Even if we die and meet after reincarnating, surely I'll be attracted to Onii-sama since we first meet."

Dying and reincarnating, we've entered spiritual realm.

"To me, Sayuri is a little sister after all."

"I don't mind that. Let's love each other as siblings. Let's shed wasteful ethics modern society embraced, assault me, Onii-sama!"

"Won't shed them! Won't throw them away! Won't assault you!"

Before I realized, she turned into the usual troubled Sayuri. She acted rational when other little sisters were there, but when I was alone with her she always goes out of control.

Sayuri faced downwards and quietly muttered.

"As I thought... do you like Mariko-san? That's why you won't... rubrub... with me?"

She made the difficult to say part "rubrub"?! Maybe she intended to fix it, but ended up making it more noticeable instead.

Without deception or hiding anything, I confessed obediently.

"I like Mariko, but I don't know yet if it's love. I love Sayuri, and you're precious to me... as family. This isn't me minding anyone, they're my true feelings."

"If you say you love me, then even more so. To protect our family, Onii-sama and me being tied together... I won't inconvenience Onii-sama! Also, I don't want Onii-sama to be embittered by having to choose just a single little sister.

Even if you choose, the entire family will remain together you know?! They will all be happy."

As long as I put up with it.

Sayuri definitely wouldn't say that. Also, it might be true that Sayuri approached me from good will. Still, her expression suggested me those words.

"They" will all be happy, there's no Sayuri in there.

Since Sayuri didn't lie to her own heart, so she didn't add "too" at the end.

She's just tricking herself to believe she loves me. That kind of "love" isn't like Sayuri.

"If it was really pure love, you wouldn't think of inconvenience to the others in the first place, don't you think?"

"Ehh?!"

As she opened eyes wide, I continued.

"If I'm tied with Sayuri, Selene, Tomomi, Yuuki and Mika will be able to live as family. So, will you convince them all? Possibly, won't they think Sayuri was sacrificed to keep this life... will they?"

"I... didn't think of that. To think my sisters would feel responsibility for my actions..."

"You said you're going to match me, then... what about your feelings? If you match everything to me, where will Sayuri go?"

"I-I want to be tied with Onii-sama. I will no longer need cute clothes. Fashion will be unnecessary. Just Onii-sama's happiness will be my happiness. That's why it's fine... if I'm gone!"

"There's no way! Sayuri isn't just me. You must be having things you want to do. Deciding your heart on just me, it's strange to give up on all possibilities you have, right?!"

"I-I don't have anything else I'd like to become. I have no special talent or personality that stands out like others. I have nothing."

Sayuri was great at cooking and at studying, but she didn't realize her "talent in effort". Whether cooking or studying, it's a gift of her effort.

"I... want the girl I like, to be free."

"Am I... not suitable for... Onii-sama?"

Powerlessly, she muttered in parts.

"I don't want you to live for my sake. For no one's sake, I want Sayuri to live for herself. As much as you think of me and your sisters, I want you to think of yourself."

That's all, saying she just care for herself would be telling her to be irresponsible. I'd hate that too.

I affirmed it.

"After you do so, when you become your real self without faking anything, come at me as much as you want, Sayuri!"

Come at me... even if I say so myself, my last words were sloppy.

And yet, Sayuri slowly nodded. With a face as if she's gone over it, she told me.

"Is that so... no, that's right. What did I do, instead of just assaulting Onii-sama with my pure desire, I made concern for everyone, future of the family and such an excuse for myself. That was rude of me towards Onii-sama! I'll reflect on it."

Apparently, what I wanted to say has been relayed to her.

As if an evil spirit haunting her, with a refreshed expression she stood up and opened the room's window. Wind blew inside, replacing the stagnant air with fresh one.

While looking outside the window, Sayuri muttered with her back to me.

"But, I won't come at you again. If Onii-sama wants to marry me when I grow up, I think that's fine... but by then, I might be someone else's, you know? I'm not unwilling to admit defeat, but... that's just how attractive I shall become."

Just once, she shrugged largely with her shoulders. As if to stifle something, she muttered.

"I'll make Onii-sama regret this. I'll become a self-supporting girl, beautiful, surely making you look to this moment. Even if you regret for letting me go, I won't concern myself with it."

Looking back at me, Sayuri wiped the tears that spilled with her index finger.

"That's why, I don't mind if Onii-sama falls in love. Also, birthday doesn't happen just once. If you separate from a lover it's once for all, but a little sister will always have an opportunity to celebrate it."

"Sayuri..."

With a smile, as tears pooled in her eyes, she gently pushed back.

16th of May, Thursday.

Contradiction. Hesitation. Innocent Feelings.

After school, we walked together the school route while talking about the next day's schedule.

Tomorrow after the lessons are over, we're going to western department store in Ikebukuro, to pick a present apparently. She thought of some, but she wanted me to make the final choice no matter what. If it's a gift from Mariko, I'd be happy with anything.

After returning from Ikebukuro after we decide on a gift, we're supposed to celebrate together in Mariko's house.

I've heard of it before when we talked through STRING, but Mariko's parents are scheduled to be travelling together and the little sister, Chitose-chan is staying at friend's house.

In other words, this...

N-not good. Don't be confused by Tomomi's words, me. Once again I ended up imagining Mariko's figure wrapped in a ribbon.

Serious Mariko wouldn't present herself as a gift... probably.

I felt as if fire was coming out from my face. Seeing it bright red, Mariko asked "what happened?", tilted her head and blushed.

W-why is Mariko getting embarrassed.

Uu... I've turned strangely conscious of her, unable to look at her face directly, I separated from her at usual intersection and took the road home.

When I stood in front of Yuuki's room, I realized I was relieved.

Even among the little sisters, Yuuki was the most mature one. When we first met each other we were nervous and at wit's end, but thanks to her being informal I was permeated with her kindness and consideration.

It might be strange to say this like that, but I'm not afraid of meeting her.

When I rang the interphone, Yuuki opened the door and welcomed me.

"Welcome back Nii-san."

"U-um... I'm back."

Even though I quit being her older brother, my contact with Yuuki didn't change.

When I passed through the living room and sat down on the sofa, she started making coffee in the kitchen. It felt like she was making regular coffee, but it might be because she's usually drinking instant coffee.

Before I realized, I've come to like the coffee with plenty of milk and sugar she makes.

The two of us drank coffee in silence. In relief, the time had slowly passed. Yuuki didn't say anything from herself.

"H-hey, Yuuki. I... quit being onii-chan but..."

She put the mug with black coffee on the table and lightly nodded.

"Whatever path Nii-san takes, I'll accept it."

"The path I take... o-oh, I see."

Speaking of which, the little sister selection hasn't concluded. I've been still putting it off.

I couldn't choose whether I continue being siblings or choose only one person and quit.

"I'm not going to chose any one of the little sister, you don't have to worry... it might sound weird, but don't worry for now."

Yuuki raised her eyebrows, troubled.

"T-that's included in it too, but my declaration just now... it meant I'll accept everything of Nii-san's."

"My everything?"

"Yup. That's why today too, I'll continue as it always was. The coffee's still black. Nii-san's is milk coffee with sugar. Also, we'll spend time together. Rambling without sense. It's an incredibly happy, pleasant time for me."

"Yuuki..."

"Nii-san worried about me and became my strength. I'm very grateful for that. As not to let it turn into just past, I'll continue to always, always thank Nii-san."

"B-being thanked that much actually turns really heavy!"

"So-sorry Nii-san! But, that's how much I want to thank you. That's why Nii-san... you might have thought of stopping being nii-san, but despite that thanks to Nii-san being nii-san, a little sister here was saved, I don't want you to forget that."

She smiled bashfully.

Not forcing or denying me. She just accepted me as I am. She acknowledged the effort I put into acting.

What a good girl she is. Yuuki's halo was too dazzling.

There was only one thing I could respond her with. Gratitude.

"U-um... thanks Yuuki. I too, am glad to have a little sister like you. Of course, it's not just you. Selene, Tomomi, Sayuri and Mika too, everyone is my precious little sister."

"Then, will Nii-san continue being nii-san?"

"That's..."

I didn't have the right to say that. Surely, Yuuki would say "no such thing" but I was afraid of being spoiled by these words.

Let's change the topic.

"H-hey, Yuuki. Look, I... in course of events ended up being onii-chan..."

"I was surprised when I suddenly learned I have a nii-san. Also, that as onee-chan I have little sisters, I was surprised... but happy. Wasn't Nii-san happy?"

"When I heard the story from Murasaki-san, it was too abstract so I didn't have time feel any emotions like happiness sprout out, I guess."

"I see. That's very much like Nii-san. Thinking ahead rather than feeling."

"You're right. I'm thinking too much."

"This time you thought too much, and your head turned too heavy, unable to hold the balance you lost support."

"With strong momentum I fell and seriously injured myself. I'm no good after all."

"You're not. Also, I don't think there's a need to force yourself to change. Nii-san just have to be himself."

If Yuuki were to become a teacher in school, she would definitely be liked.

"Be myself... huh."

"Nii-san, tomorrow, you're going to Mariko-san's place, right?"

"Y-yeah."

While I felt awkward, Yuuki smiled.

"Leave Mika-chan to me!"

"Sorry... not that. Thanks, Yuuki."

"Yup yup. That's it, Nii-san. It's fine to rely on me. So, at what time will Nii-san come home? You're eating lunch with Mariko-san, right?"

"T-that's...um, how long will it take..."

"Eh? It can't be, are you staying over?!"

Yuuki's eyes opened with with surprise. Her face turned red up to her ears.

"No no no. It's just Mariko's parents and little sister being away from home... haa?!"

I ended up saying that.

"Nii-san, c-c--can it be... you're graduating from virginity?!"

"How about you're more discreteeeEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!"

"But, that's how it is right?"

"T-that possibility... isn't non-existent but..."

Yuuki's face was completely boiling red. She had a dumbfounded expression.

"Nii-san. Make sure... uh, to w-wear the rubber thing."

"UWAAAAAAAAHHH

"I-is that so."

"Indeed, Nii-san. At times like this the man has to do it."

I had no experience holding hands with any girl other than my little sisters. I mean, even when dating Tomomi in Shibuya I felt nervous with my little sister.

"G-got it, I'll try."

"It's okay. Nii-san can do it!"

Being encouraged felt somewhat embarrassing.

"See, Nii-san already gained experience on a date with Tomomi-chan and me, so you should be confident!"

Speaking of which, I was going out with Selene too... haven't I.

There was no hesitate on a date with Mariko tomorrow.

"Y-yeah. Thanks for encouragement, Yuuki."

"Do your best, Nii-san!"

I drank the coffee with milk and nodded. Healed by the sweetness, I exhaled with relief.

"Nii-san, you've got a beard of milk-coffee colour."

Yuuki took out several tissues for a box and lightly touching me she wiped it off.

"I-I'm not a kid, I can do it myself!"

"It's fine isn't it. We're siblings and all."

She stared at me again.

"It's really a wonder, that we are siblings."

"You and I, we're not similar at all."

Yuuki was a slender and well-proportioned beauty, just by standing there she gathers a crowd. In addition to being slender she has large breasts... a-anyway, she's a conspicuous existence.

Noticing my gaze lowered a little, Yuuki hid her chest with her arm.

"I didn't mean appearance wise, I just meant there's mysterious fate!"

With my stare being found out, I responded in panic.

"Y-yeah! Fate... huh. A year ago, if I was told this will happen, I wouldn't believe it."

"I think it's the same for me. I'd be surprised to learn that I have such a wonderful Nii-san."

"I-it's embarrassing! Don't add any praises into it!"

"It's the truth and yet getting all embarrassed, Nii-san's so cute."

This is bad... no, actually there's nothing bad about it, it's just Yuuki's own pace.

"U-umm, Yuuki. I..."

"What is it, Nii-san?"

"At first... I hardly knew anything about Jinya-san, and I forgot everything from when I small... when it turned like this, I was confused."

Yuuki fell silent and waited for me to stop speaking.

"I was glad, being able to meet everyone."

"Somehow, that way of putting it feels like we won't meet again."

"I didn't intend to say that..."

Since tomorrow, I'm celebrating my birthday with Mariko, it feels like everyone is very distant.

"What about declaration of quitting being onii-chan?"

Even though everyone declared "they won't become my little sisters" it felt strange.

"Yuuki too, when I asked you to become my little sister, have said you won't."

"You're right. I guess it's still in effect."

"And yet, I"m still onii-chan, right?"

"That's right!"

"Isn't that a contradiction?"

She nodded.

"It's a contradiction, but you should accept it as is. What's wrong with contradicting! So what! Kind of feeling. I like Nii-san and all my sisters. If I have to lie to these feelings in order to solve the contradiction, I'd rather accept this contradiction."

"Somehow, it's a real mess... but once said, instead it feels like a large vessel."

"Nii-san too, should enter the big bag of contradictions and get engulfed, it's fine you know?"

"Engulfed you say..."

"I think it's important."

Yuuki gently put a hand on whereabouts of her heart.

Knowing something is important and not losing sight of it, you'll somehow manage.

That's what Yuuki taught me.

Before I realized, I became her student. At times she teaches me, is taught by me, supports me and is supported by me, and so we live on. It might be normal, but I feel like I was taught the importance of it by Yuuki.

"Oh right, Nii-san! How about we go out now?"

"Where on earth?"

"If we play with her together, Mika-chan won't feel lonely any more."

"So Mika's room, huh!"

When I realized, Yuuki happily squinted.

Compensating for tomorrow... is how it turns out, I guess.

"Is that fine with you, Yuuki?"

"Nii-chan knows best, that she's the girl I like the most, right?"

"Yeah, but... is it all right?"

I was worried about intruding on Murasaki-san's schedule.

"I confirmed that Mika's free today."

Yuuki took out her smartphone and smiled. She was too skilful, as expected of the girl Mika loves a lot.

"Let's go then, Yuuki."

"Yup! Let's go Nii-san!"

We lef the room together and got down to the second floor on elevator together.

As we stood side by side in front of Mika's room, I rang the interphone.

Mika immediately opened the door and smiled to me and Yuuki.

"Yay! It's Nii-chama and Nee-chamaa. You really came, Mii-chan is thrilled. But, is it really fine, Nee-chama?"

Erasing her smile, Mika looked up at Yuuki anxiously.

"Since I'm intruding together with Nii-chan, I won't think "Nii-chan was taken!". More than that, spending time with Mika-chan makes me happy."

If I was a girl and Yuuki a boy, I would fall for her, that's how strong her handsome power is.

"Same for me. That's why there's nothing for Mika to worry about."

Mika jumped happily in the front doors.

"Then, theen, together! Four of us together!"

"Me, Mika and Yuuki... f-four?!

I turned around and confirmed in a hurry. There was no one in the apartment's hallway. It can't be, meanwhile Murasaki-san has...

Yuuki nodded to Mika with a smile.

"That's right. Mika, Nii-san, me and Maple makes four."

"Yup!"

Ahh, what, she meant Maple. I'm a bit too scared of Murasaki-san, aren't I.

Mika let us pass through, and I went with Yuuki to the living room.

Speaking of which, although the weekend we're together, spending weekdays like this is a first time. Being with Mika and Yuuki together felt fresh.

In the living room, on the stool, sat Maple.

"Maple is sleepy today. Good night."

Mika took Maple in her hands and dragged him to the bedroom.

From the bedroom's direction we could hear her voice.

"C'mon, from here on it's adult's time, it's too early for Maple. Also, staying up late is against beauty and health, right?"

It seems like she was having a hard time persuading him. Still, Maple's setting had changed into something strange again...

After a while, Mika returned to the living room with look of accomplishment on her face. Yuuki asked.

"Did Maple go to sleep properly?"

"He diiid. His sleepiness is way too awesome."

"If he's that sleepy, it's better if he sleeps, right."

While speaking with Mika, Yuuki happily squinted. I need to do some work too, I guess.

"Sit down you two."

As I headed to kitchen, Yuuki called out to me.

"It's fine Nii-san, I'll do it."

I turned around and spoke to her as if pleading to her.

"Let me do it from time to time. Please."

"Will you be all right, Nii-san?"

"Making cocoa is simple enough."

I warmed up milk in the range in the kitchen then made instant cocoa.

With three cups of cocoa lined up on the tray, I returned to living room.

Mika and Yuuki were singing together on sofa in the living room.

"What taste will Nii-chama's cocoa have⁓⁓♪."

"Surely a gentle taste⁓⁓♪."

These were some extremely embarrassing lyrics. Unfamiliar with such happy feelings, I felt awkward.

"I have kept you waiting, Milady. Princess. I have prepared cocoa."

As I quietly put cocoa on the table, Mika opened her eyes wide.

"M-Mii-chan's milady? Princess? W-which is it?"

Yuuki folded her hands and thought.

"Hmm, which is it I wondeer."

Mika nodded with cocoa cup in her hands.

"Nii-chama, Yuuki-neechama is like a prince, isn't she."

Suddenly, the talk turned into a strange direction.

"U-umm..."

My reply was stuck in my throat, when I turned my line of sight, unexpectedly Yuuki was agitated by what Mika said.

"I-I-I'm a prince?! And here I thought I raised my girl powerr."

"Don't get depressed, Yuuki! It was my mistake now. Both of you are princesses."

Mika said "I see, Nii-chama's so careless" and laughed innocently.

Yuuki was also relieved.

Sipping her cocoa, Mika proposed to me and Yuuki.

"Umm, you know! Mii-chan wants to take a bath together today, with three of us!"

Yuuki's face turned red.

"T-three of us... siblings alone..."

She soundly swallowed saliva. This is where I need to interrupt as older brother.

"Hey, Mika. As expected, the three of us is a little..."

Mika puffed up her cheek, it looked like a baked rice cake.

"Eeee! But Nii-chama took a bath with me before."

Yuuki's ears twitched. She leaned towards me, who was sitting on the stool.

"What does that mean, Nii-san?!"

"Umm, by that, you mean?"

"Did you bath?! Did you take a bath with Mika-chan?!"

Thoroughly, she asked me twice. I guess I need to answer honestly. And, about the time I thought that, Mika smiled happily.

"That's right. Nii-chama did work with shampoo. After that, um, Mii-chan's boobies are flat so there's no need for bra and I was made to go into bath for hundred count."

Yuuki snorted.

"Nii-san! T-that's no good!"

"W-what's no good..."

"I-I'm o-outrageously envious! Nii-san!"

She was disturbed to the point her tone changed... when it comes to Mika, Yuuki actually changes into a different person.

Mika stared alternately at mine and Yuuki's face.

"Then then, let's enter together three of us?"

Yuuki's face went *paaaaaa*! And started emitting heat.

"M-Mika-chan, t-that's um... err..."

"Yuuki-neechama, do you hate Nii-chama? You don't want to take a bath together, yet Mii-chan is forcing you?"

Hearing Mika worry about that, Yuuki held down her own cheeks with both hands and shook her head sideways.

"I-I like Nii-san! It's because I like him that it's troubling."

"Yuuki-neechama is strange. Nii-chama will of course enter bath, right?"

Ugh... this is where it gets stormy... heck, I'm minding others again.

That's not it. If I speak with Mika properly, she'll understand.

By believing others, we can face each other. I need to speak with her honestly here.

"We can't go in the three of us."

"Eh?!! Why?"

"Did you go to a public bath, hot spring or a bathhouse before?"

"I know what are they!"

"Adult men and women go into bath separately."

"Adult bathhouse?"

I don't think it's on purpose, but her way of mistaking it is really risqué.

"Uhh, that's not it... anyway, when you turn into an adult, a woman being seen naked by a man is extremely embarrassed. That's why men and women are separated in bath."

Mika tilted her head.

"Haa. Is that soo. It's slightly hard to understand for Mii-chan."

She spoke strangely like Murasaki-san does. And then, noticing something, Mika opened her eyes wide in surprise.

"Does that mean, Mii-chan is still a child?!"

Troubled, Yuuki raised her eyebrows.

"It might be so."

"Kyaa! How embarrassing! Mii-chan is so embarrassed for being seen by Nii-chama."

Then she strangely screamed. So that's how much she wanted to be recognized as an adult.

I continued towards her.

"It can't be helped then. Mika's an adult lady, so there's no way you'll enter bath with me."

"Ah... y-yup. Mii-chan won't repeat herself. I'll enter bath alone."

Regretfully and sad, Mika lowered her shoulders. Somehow, it was a pitiful deployment as well. All right, let's do it like this.

"But, both Mika and Yuuki are girls, if you two girls enter bath, it won't be embarrassing, right?"

Mika's smile, dazzling like the sun had returned.

"Is Nii-chama a genius?"

"Genius sounds like too much, but I think it's a good idea myself. Yuuki, it's fine isn't it?"

When I turned my gaze towards Yuuki again... with tears in her eyes and red up to her ears, she was trembling.

Mika stared anxiously at Yuuki's face.

"Nee-chama, are you okay?!"

"I-II'm a'all right! If anything, I'm turning really healthy!"

"That's greatt."

After exhaling with relief, Mika stared at my face next.

"Nii-chama, Mii-chan climbed the stairs to adulthood."

Umm... since she knows being seen naked by a man is embarrassing... I guess.

"Y-you're right. You grew significantly."

"Significantly?"

"It's like impressive, very distinguished. Anyway, I'm impressed by how amazing Mika is."

"So it's that much."

Ehhen, Mika puffed up her flat chest. And then continued calmly.

"Mii-chan loves Nii-chama."

"Mika... w-what are you saying suddenly here?"

"Because she loves Nii-chama, she wants to cheer him on."

Cheer... huh.

"Mii-chan heard a lot for Nee-chamas. Yuuki-neechama, Selene-neechama, Tomomi-neechama and Sayuri-neeechama, they all cheer for Nii-chama, so do your best. Mii-chan is the same. That's why next Mii-chan wants to cheer Nii-chama on."

Yuuki gently embraced Mika from behind, wrapping around under Mika's arms.

"That's right Mika-chan. I feel the same. Mika-chan is still an elementary schooler, but to be able to cheer Nii-san on, you're amazing."

Mika nodded with a big smile.

"Yup! 'Cause, Mii-chan is lady! That's why, take care tomorrow Nii-chama! In exchange, give some service today!"

Service, just where did she learn that word...

She forgave me for spending tomorrow with Mariko.

The stabbing I've felt in my heart the entire time felt like it's being washed away.

It's not just Mika.

From Selene, Tomomi, Sayuri, Yuuki too.

I felt everyone encouraging me.

"G-got it! I'll do anything today! I'll service you with my body on the line!"

She nodded, and immediately made a request.

"Then then, continuation of playing house. Mii-chan will be mom, Yuuki-neechama will be dad instead of Maple. Nii-chama's eldest son!"

NOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOoOOOoOOoOooooooooo!

On that day, I played house until Mika got tired of it. In the middle of it Yuuki had gotten really into it and the two acted unexpectedly excited, until it was time for their bath, I continued with the role of the eldest son.

17th of May, Friday.

Sixteen Year Old. Birthday. The Place of My Memories.

After school, Mariko and I headed towards the station and got on the bus. Since we just left school, we were still in our uniforms.

Mariko's pale chestnut hair was of length where it barely touched her shoulders, it oozed the usual calm feeling. Having her around, I somehow felt relieved.

But, it was troubling that my line of sight tended to go towards her breasts, hidden under the uniform's ribbon. It's 100% my fault.

We sat on the bus' two seater, in close contact I felt my heart beating quickly. I dropped my line of sight at Mariko's knees, and we were shaken together on the bus.

As I faced downwards Mariko asked "What happened? Are you okay?" worried.

I responded with a smile.

"I'm all right. It's nothing."

There was me, who wanted to care about my little sisters more. I shook my head in my mind, shaking off that existence.

I decided to celebrate the birthday with Mariko. Everyone had encouraged and pushed my back too, I won't think of pathetic things.

As I was in lost in thoughts, the bus arrived in front of the station.

I didn't speak with Mariko all that much. I-it's a date so I have to take lead.

We got off the bus in front of the station's traffic circle, then rode on a private railway and headed to Tokyo's station. Since we rode on the private JR railway, we didn't have to transfer.

We arrived in Tokyo's Ikebukuro station. If any, I think it's located in close to the Saitama Prefecture.

When I told her that, Mariko chuckled.

Mariko said "Ikebukuro is part of Saitama Prefecture's territory". She's something quite unreasonable.

Speaking of which, when I was doing date practice with Tomomi I listed Ikebukuro as one of the location candidates for the date.

There were quite a few stores for otakus, it was also famous for Otome Road and such.

On the east was Akihabara. Ikebukuro in the north. Nakano in the west. The International Exhibition Centre was in the south, two times a year there was a big festival performed in them. Like four heavenly kings.

Hmm, there's no topic to touch with Mariko.

While I thought such things, Mariko looked into my face curiously. She said "Can it be that you're not feeling good? Are you forcing yourself?" worrying.

Not good. For a while now, I'm not really having fun.

No wait, if I try pretending to have fun, Mariko might get worried.

"Ah, no, that's... I just thought Ikebukuro is very lively. My condition is flawless. Sorry Mariko. It's my birthday, but I'm still like this."

She shook her head energetically. After that, "Don't say sorry or think anything like that. It's fine even if you don't force yourself to have fun" like that, as if reading my mind like a psychic and she smiled gently.

And then, Mariko lowered her head and started making fidgety gestures with her hands.

"Umm... let's go?"

I took her hand. I gently held it. At times like this man has to lead.

Mariko let out a quiet "ah!", but didn't seem unwilling. Just slightly, her cheeks were dyed red.

Her hand was slightly moist. Seems like she was nervous, my hand was the same. I intended to maintain conscious at normal level, but my heart started beating faster on its own.

Side by side, holding hands, we started walking.

We exited the busy station premises through the passage and entered the western department store.

Mariko suddenly stopped and said this to me.

"I'm sorry! Actually... I already prepared the present."

So she didn't want me to choose one.

When I asked her, Mariko said "I wanted to ride a train and do some window shopping together", announcing the true purpose of today's outing.

"In that case you should have said so."

It was a small lie, but she said "sorry" and she lightly stuck out her tongue as she apologized.

While making that gesture, Mariko embarrassedly rubbed her knees together, squirming.

I was still lying to Mariko, in continuous tense that is. I kept silent about having little sisters and lied about it. If anything, I should be the one apologizing.

On the other hand, what would happen if I let it out here. The birthday party might not even happen.

Until today, Mariko continued to prepare for my birthday. Thinking of that, I felt like I shouldn't say it.

We circled around the department store's floors together. Girls really do enjoy this, even if they're not buying anything, do they.

On the floor with luxury bags and shoes lined up, I glanced at Mariko to see how she reacts.

When she looked at the price "Uwaa. Expensive. I wonder if rich people buy these hmm." she muttered, moved.

"Do you want something like this, Mariko?"

She shook her head sideways. And then "From time to time, I think 'it's cute!' but, I'm more surprised by the price.... and I'm satisfied with that. Is it weird?" laughing shyly.

It's really hard to get a grasp on her, that Mariko.

Naturally, we held hands as we walked side by side.

If I was with everyone... if I touched my little sisters, would I be calm like this.

Somehow, a part of me started comparing Mariko with everyone. Though I say comparing, it wasn't who's better, but rather the difference im impressions.

How about comparing them to animals.

Selene was like a cat. When it's cold she stays where it's hot. When it's hot, she's good at finding cool places. She seemed like a master when it came to finding places comfortable for her.

Tomomi felt like a dog to me. Full of energy, she seemed honest with her feelings. Were snow to start falling, she'd be the first one to jump outside.

Sayuri would be either a fox or a raccoon. At first she fooled me acting like a fox, when her identity was seen through she turned into a charming racoon. When she transforms well, Sayuri is perfect.

Yuuki seems like a big animal. Quiet and calm, like an elephant or a whale. She's worried about her height so I can't tell her that. That's why, though I don't think it'll happen, if she asks "what kind of animal would you liken me to?" I'll answer with "rabbit". She has the agility and her ears standing upright act like a sensor.

Mika would be a hamster, I guess. Small and cute, if you let your eyes off her, before you realize she's in some surprising place. If you stimualte her curiousity, it seems like she'd run endlessly.

Mariko gives off a feeling of a squirrel. It's not like she's good at climbing trees, and she doesn't give off an impression of someone who'd stuff her cheeks with acorn... this, is ultimately just my impression.

Suddenly, I had a thought. I didn't learn much about Mariko since we have reunited. That's why, even if I try to liken her to an animal, I can't give any good reason as to why I thought she's like a squirrel.

With a worried expression, Mariko asked me "can it be that you're bored?".

Damn. You're spacing out too much, me. Mariko is right in front of me and yet I'm thinking of everyone...

"No such thing."

Mariko responded with "that's great" and breathed out with relief.

I shook my head in my mind, then drove the little sisters out of my head.

And yet, everyone's faces floated in my mind. Like this, I can't get away from my little sisters.

We headed upstairs on the escalator with Mariko. We looked past the stores with men's clothing and toy's exhibition space, what was left was only the top floor.

As we headed to the top floor no the escalator, Mariko muttered a bit regretfully "We've already come up to the top floor".

"Where to next?"

She raised her eyebrows troubled and "Umm, you see... actually I didn't think of anything.", and blushed shyly.

So she didn't... usually she's very neatly prepared, that was sloppy of Mariko.

No, that's wrong. I one-sidedly labelled Mariko as "neat girl". She too, is just a normal girl.

IF she didn't plan anything, it's rather a chance for me to lead Mariko. It might be good to take a look at stores located along the Shansain street.

The moment I tried to propose that, after we've gotten to the top floor on escalator, my legs stopped at once.

I don't know when was it, but the scenery I knew spread out in front of me.

The stores in the interior were different, but I knew the atmosphere of this floor.

Why did the word "know" had come to my mind.

In my chest... my heart beat loudly. Feeling an illusion as if I could heart my heartbeat, I couldn't stand in one place.

"Where's this floor's elevator?!"

As I suddenly raised my voice "Eh? Hey, what happened, suddenly?" Mariko seemed confused.

Still holding Mariko's hand, I hurriedly looked for the elevator.

That's right. My hand pulled by that person, I have came to this floor all at once many times. To head to that place, located on this floor.

That's why I had to find the elevator.

Mariko made an astounded expression and was pulled by hand by me.

I immediately found the elevator that was my goal.

When I stood in the back of the elevator, I have fit perfectly in my memory.

After getting off the elevator, I walked straight ahead. The end of the road, innermost part... and outlook restaurant. We have arrived right in front of it.

Mariko acted timidly. Pulled by me "This... it feels very like showa period." she muttered. The restaurant had a retro atmosphere.

Ever since I was a child, it had aged like this.

The place of my memories... the unchanged place.

The showcase in front of the restaurant had various samples lined up side by side. The menu hasn't changed for a long time, the samples themselves were old.

Among them, I found children's lunch.

On the dish, there was omurice, hamburger, fried shrimp.

The set's desert was... pudding parfait.

Mariko tilted her head "Can it be, that you're hungry?" she asked, worrying about me.

"U-um, that's not it..."

From the restaurant's entrance I looked inside. My eyes were naturally drawn to the seats by the window of the outlook restaurant.

The seat with scenery outlook. Like a powder snow falling, my memory was revived.

When the elevator's door opened, we entered the top floor. I walked, my hand was pulled by Uncle. Straight towards the end of the path, to an outlook restaurant. Lined-up in the glass showcase were chocolate parfaits, pudding parfaits, fried shrimps and omelets, hamburgers with plenty of demi-glace sauce.

Back then, just like today it was a special day. Eat whatever you like, Uncle said.

I told Uncle I want to eat everything, and he smiled gently.

"Then, a children's lunch."

The fried shrimp, hamburger and omelet were lined up on a single dish. Pudding parfait for the desert. All of it my favourites and they were all delicious.

After filling my tummy with the feast, I watched the outside while drinking cream soda and suddenly thought.

On that day too, it was my birthday.

That's right... I remember. Everything... I remember all.

Uncle——Jinya-san, back then when we celebrated my birthday, said this.

It was a simple... yet serious question.

At first, I didn't know what was the meaning of it.

But, while I was a child, despite being a child, that proposal seemed like a very good thing.

That's why I responded with "Yup!".

I chose... with my own will, the future I am in now.

And yet, I completely forgot about it.

Since Jinya-san no longer came, I acted selfishly and troubled Grandpa and Grandma.

When I asked why Jinya-san doesn't come, Grandpa got really angry.

And I was told to forget about Jinya-san. He no longer came, six months, then a year passed and I decided to forget and give up.

Back then I was sad. I thought I was abandoned by Jinya-san. Also, I loved Grandpa and Grandma, I decided to thin out Jinya-san's existence in my heart.

Right now, I could understand both Jinya-san's and Grandpa's feelings.

Back then, surely, Jinya-san wanted to pick me and everyone up together.

But Jii-chan didn't allow it.

Having little sisters, of women other than my mother to live with me. Grandpa couldn't forgive such a thing.

Jinya-san wanted to make me his ally.

With his pure feelings, he must have asked me that question.

There was no way to tell what'll happen at this point... but I responded with "yup!" on that day, back then... I was happy. I felt like I have gained a lot of treasure.

The important treasure. Family... little sisters.

"Sorry, Mariko! I... need to go!"

Mariko opened her eyes wide "Go? Where to?" and tilted her head.

"I need to go back to my little sisters... there's something I have to tell them!" I quietly let go of her hand.

Mariko... stood in that place. From her mouth "...little sisters?" had leaked out.

She had a strange expression. It wasn't angry or sad, it was a dazed on where she forgot such feelings.

Sorry. I'm really sorry. I'm really really sorry.

I was still confused myself. But I had to go.

I ran. There was no time to wait for the elevator. I jumped onto the escalator that was wrapping around the floors, ran out of the department store and to the station's automatic ticket gate.

To be there even if a second faster.

The birthday Mariko prepared for me was cancelled in the worst possible way.

I regretted it, but it was already too late.

Led by Mariko, I was able to stand in the place of my memories on the day I was born, was it a coincidence? Or maybe... it's what they call fate.

No, including this timing, everything, was surely a coincidence.

That's why, no matter how much I thank Mariko for drawing out this lucky coincidence, it won't be enough.
And yet I betrayed Mariko, returned good with evil.

My feelings turned blank. But I made my choice.

Give up.

Mariko can no longer act like an excuse.

I have chosen everyone... my little sisters.

Even if I wasn't helped by Mariko by chance, I would have stopped at this place of memories one day. And recall just like I did today. But at that time, we siblings would have already separated, the relation with Taishido would have been cut as well.

It would have been too late.

No, anyhow, if I didn't choose, the chance I break up with everyone would be just as high as it is now.

Still, I wanted to say it.

Before we all separate, once again, I wanted to confront with everyone.

When I arrived at the nearest station, the bus has just arrived. I exhaled with relief and jumped off. At premises of the station I sprinted the entire time, on the seat of the bus for a while I continued to breathe roughly afterwards. My smartphone was still quiet.

Suddenly, I wondered if I have fallen out of Mariko's grace.

Getting of the bus, I stood in front of Taishido residence.

I looked up at the building.

Thinking of it now, my room——room 701, that pointlessly large space... all of it, might have been thought up by Jinya-san.

Rushing through the mansion's lobby, I rushed to Mika's room on the second floor.

The time I spent waiting for elevator was frustrating.

Regretting that I didn't take stairs which would be faster, I rode the elevator to get onto the second floor.

In front of Mika's room, I took a deep breath.

I rang the interphone and opened the door myself.
"Eh?! It's Nii-chama?"

From the living room, Mika holding Maple had appeared.

"There's no way Nii-chan would be ba... seriously?"

Tomomi looked out into the hallway and was shocked.

"Even if you want to surprise me like that, I won't be fooled."

Seeing Tomomi's surprised reaction, Sayuri sighed and looked out to the hallway, she made a dumbfounded expression.

"What's up you three? No matter how much you miss Nii-san, for today bear with just imaginary Nii-san."

Yuuki spoke calmly, then confirming me stand upright in the hallway, she was at loss for words.

"...Onii-chan?"

Lying around on the floor of the living room, Selene tilted her head.

"I-I'm back, everyone."

Immediately, Tomomi raised her voice.

"Nii-chan, aren't you staying the night elsewhere toady?! Why?!"

What Tomomi said was extreme, but apparently everyone thought that "I won't be coming back". Furthermore, Tomomi added.

"Seriously Nii-chan. Sneaking out from sleepover aside, you've come back too early even considering normal way. Just what happened?"

Sayuri made a troubled expression.

"T-tt-tthat's right. Why is it?"

Yuuki sighed lightly.

"Nii-san, were you worried about us?"

Mika wondered curiously.

"Nii-chama, you have to cherish your friends, right?"

Selene muttered absent-mindedly.

"...we did our best to encourage Nii-chan... it's no good to come back, is it."

The gaze of surprised little sisters, before I realized, had turned into blaming stares. Tomomi drew closer to me.

"It can't be, that you left Mariko-chan alone and came back, right? Or maybe Nii-chan, Mariko-chan waits outside and you intend to introduce her to us... or something?"

In that case, we won't hesitate to meet. Actually, that's how it is, right? Right? Like so, Tomomi's eyes appealed to me.

I shook my head.

"I separated from Mariko and came back alone."

"Did you get into a fight? Failing once or twice and running away, I have misjudged you, Onii-sama."

"I didn't. It was one-sided at my convenience... I know it's no good."

Yuuki muttered worriedly.

"That's bad, Nii-san. You need to go pick up Mariko-chan immediately. Leaving Mariko-chan and escaping, that's not like Nii-san."

"I... won't lie to my feelings... any more. I like Mariko. But...closer to me, I noticed something more important to me..."

When I decided to be honest with my feelings, I noticed that I like Mariko. Because I like her, it felt painful not to chose her, who's important to me, unable to give priority to both, I put the two important things on the balance and I tried my best to retain them balanced as not to be hated by either of them.

Mika hugged Maple tightly and looked up at me.

"Nii-chama, you can't treat girls horribly!"

"Sorry. Mika... I'll properly apologize to Mariko."

Selene muttered dazedly.

"...what does Onii-chan want to do?"

The girl I like, my important little sisters. The balance in my heart swayed largely.

From now on Mariko might become either a stranger or a lover to me. We might remain friends, but we might as well break away. Whatever is the outcome, the future is still ahead.

But, everyone... my relationship with everyone whether in past or now, and in future, surely won't change. Ahead of now, even if we're separated, before that happens I'll declare of "unchanging relation". Wherever we are, whoever we are with, that we... are a family.

"Right now, what I have to choose... is everyone. No matter what, I, want little sisters! I've always wanted little sisters!"

Everyone at once, made a confused expression.

Suddenly, Tomomi let out a panicked voice.

"W-what are you saying after all this time? I-I told you. I'm fine loving you one-sidedly as little sister. B-b-b-but, i-if you say that, i-it's mutual love! Ah! I see, so it's about making Mika the little sister?"

I shook my head and continued.

"I'll make everyone little sisters. Not sparing a single one, I'll make everyone my little sisters. Be spoiled by me, Tomomi! From today on I'm sixteen, although for short time, I'm still older than Tomomi. That's like nii-chan, right?"

"A-are you stupid? That's not like Nii-chan at all."

"Then I'll be like an older brother from now on. I won't hesitate any longer. I'll become everyone's older brother. That's why, everyone, become my little sisters... let's become a family."

I'm fully aware it was absurd. It isn't not choosing or not being able to chose.

I choose everyone.

"A-and what if we don't become one? Nii-chan, you're usually fearful of that."

"We will. There's no way we won't become a family."

I won't show weakness. If onii-chan is anxious, everyone will become anxious.

Tomomi was on verge of crying.

"Uu, Nii-chan broke."

"I like Tomomi. You're energetic and a good leader, I love the active and positive Tomomi. Wanting to be with people you love, is natural, right?"

Her face on the verge of crying turned red. Beside her, Sayuri trembled like a little dog.

"O-Onii-sama! It's not fair just saying that to Tomomi-san!"

"I love Sayuri too! You're hard working, have a firm grasp on yourself, good at cooking and feminine, also... I think your a bit malicious parts are also cute!"

"The last part was uncalled for!"

Even as she said that, Sayuri started trembling even stronger.

Mika jumped on spot.

"And Mii-chan?!"

"I love Mika a lot too. You're honest, pure, cute like an angel and I want to protect you. Also, you have a qualities of an adult lady."

"Mii-chan's a lady?"

"Yeah. You snuggle up to people who are sad and encourage them, I think it's wonderful."

She raised up her hands up to her cheeks and started squirming while repeating "Oh my, oh my".

Casting repeated glances, Yuuki reminded of herself with her gaze.

"You don't have to worry that much, it's all right. I love Yuuki. You have a gentle and warm heart, being able to respect others like that is wonderful. That's the Yuuki I love!"

"Ni-Nii-san. On me... i-it's a waste!"

"I think being humble, is also your charm point."

From Yuuki's face, steam had rose with *fuhyaa⁓*

"...Onii-chan, what happened."

Selene alone, was silent.

"Ah. Selene... about you..."

"...you don't have to praise me."

"These aren't praises. Just like you told me, I'm just being honest with my feelings."

"...why today, with this timing?"

"I recalled everything."

Mariko being the trigger was concerning.

Next time we meet I'll tell her everything. I don't think I'll be forgiven with that.

Selene tilted her head in wonder.

"...everything... is it?"

"Yeah. This situation, it wasn't forced on us by anyone, it's the 'now' I wished for. I made that promise... with Dad."

"...remembered, about becoming onii-chan? Because you remembered you decided so in the past... and that's all?"

I turned towards Selene and shook my head.

"It's not to fulfil the promise. I don't feel any sense of duty from the promise. It was the trigger, it's not because I remember that I'm going to make everyone a little sister."

"...then, why?"

Selene's pupils like jewels stared at me intently. Not just her. Everyone waited for my answer.

Remembering, was merely a trigger.

"I, back when I was a kid, I was even greedier than now. Also, I was selfish. And that failed, I regretted that. That's why I think it's not good, I thought I grew up... I thought I've become an adult."

Tomomi sighed lightly.

"I see. That's why Nii-chan, you have no hobby. Like, wanting to do this, or wanting that! Kind of things."

I nodded in response to her words and continued.

"You're right. And yet, despite being a sore loser I thought it's fine to lose. It's just a game... and such. While doing so I protected my small pride. In the end, even if I superficially tried to become an adult, I realized I'm still just a kid."

Yuuki made a helpless expression.

"Nii-san, are you going to deny everything you have piled up so far? Saying it that way, it feels like you're saying you will throw away all the effort to become better."

"You're worried aren't you. Don't wor... it might be strange to say that, but now it's a plus to me, see. For a little bit more, I think of trying to open a window in my heart for my own desires. It's been always closed you know. That I thought of that, is all thanks to everyone. Having a dream, something I want to do, hope, looking forward... I affirm what I want to do. I finally realized theimportance of that. I remembered that I too, had feelings like that. That's why I'm going to open window of my desires. Make me your onii-chan everyone!"

I took all my feelings and as they were, I spoke them to everyone.

Selene had come unsteadily and clung onto me.

"...I, Tamiya Selene acknowledge Taishido Yoichi as onii-chan."

Immediately after, Tomomi reacted.

"N-not fair! Me too... I'll acknowledge Nii-chan as nii-chan!

Tomomi hugged and clung onto my arm. Her sandwiching my arm between her chest... uhh, surely, definitely Tomomi didn't notice at all.

Sayuri hesitated.

"If I admit it... I'll be always... a little sister, right."

Muttering that, Sayuri took my left arm.

"But, I acknowledge it. I accept Onii-sama as onii-sama. I don't know what lies ahead, but right now I want to become a little sister."

Right now... in other words, in future she might think of different development.

But, still, she was a little sister for now.

Mika jumped on my back and rode on me.

"Nii-chama is forever, Mii-chan's nii-chama! Even if he dies!"

Don't kill me! I'll do my best as not to die!

"U-um... I'm..."

Selene turned her arm around my torso and after shifting, called Yuuki over.

"I love Nii-san too! In a non-misunderstood way of course!"

Hugged by Yuuki as well, I was buried in little sisters.

"Everyone, you'll be my little sisters?"

Selene nodded lightly.

"...if Onii-chan wishes for it."

Tomomi made a troubled smile.

"Maybe we should have become honest with each other from the start."

Sayuri breathed in through her nose.

"One day, more than siblings but less than lovers... umm, i-it's nothing."

With a soundly and beautiful voice, Yuuki said.

"I have Nii-san and cute sisters. Nothing makes me more happy."

Mika from behind my back, hugged me even more tightly.

"Mii-chan loves Nii-chama and nee-chamas very much!"

I slowly nodded.

"Me too. Take care of me from now on."

Finally, I accepted everyone and was accepted by everyone.

At last, we reached the start line for becoming siblings.

Unexpectedly, Tomomi muttered.

"...Onii-chan, happy birthday."

Then everyone continued that.

"Ah! You're right. Happy birthday, Nii-chan."

"Congratulations. Ahh, Onii-sama has become even manlier again..."

"Nii-san, happy birthday. I wish you that the coming year will be happy for you, Nii-san."

"Congratulations Nii-chama. Maple too is saying happy birthday!"

I wasn't sad, and yet suddenly my tears overflowed. The older brother crying, so uncool.

When I did, as if infected, everyone started breaking in tears.

"...these tears are illusion."

"Wow! Strange. It's like rainy weather. Even though there's clear sky in my heart."

"How mysterious. Seems like we were enticed by Nii-san."

"When sad, tears are salty, are happy tears sweet?"

"Mii-chan isn't crying! She isn't crying!"

It might have been a ritual required for us to become a family.

And like that, we have taken a step forward to becoming a family.

——And when I thought so, suddenly, the interphone had sounded in the room informing us of the visitor.

I checked the person in the door and resolved myself.

The last judgement announcing the end of world. The interphone was the angel blowing the trumpet heralding it.

17th of May, Friday cont.

Resolve. Zeal. Answer of the Heart.

A visitor who'd come to Mika's room at a time like this, there was only one.

The interphone's LCD screen reflected Murasaki-san's suit.

Tomomi howled.

"Entire crew, first level alert! Prepare anti-trustee interception!"

In a hurry, Sayuri entered the kitchen, confirmed the gas' main valve and opened the window.

"I-is this fine?!"

That's countermeasures for earthquake. A sigh leaked from my mouth.

"Rather, what on earth is that trustee interception preparation."

I opened the front door with the key, when I nodded to Murasaki-san's "excuse me" she came in.

Her taking us to Maumauland felt like it happened very long time ago.

Today she didn't wear glasses.

She stared right at me and calmly asked.

"Did you have any kind of change of mind?"

"Eh? Me... you mean?"

"Yes. I feel like the atmosphere is different."

"I've become more aware and might have turned a bit more like an older brother."

Without moving a single eyebrow, Murasaki-san curtly replied with "Is that so".

Together with Murasaki-san, everyone returned to living room.

You're too scared! My mind wouldn't calm down to an extent where I wanted to retort like that. Still, I resolved myself.

I turned around. Standing as if to protect everyone behind me, I confronted Murasaki-san.

"So, what's the business?"

Possibly, we might be being evicted from Taishido residence.

My heart pounded quickly.

Murasaki-san looked around the room and exhaled slowly.

"It seems like all little sister candidates are gathered. I scheduled to visit all individually, so it saves time."

"What's the bussiness, Murasaki-san?"

With her usual cold look, she closed her mouth.

"If Murasaki-san won't say anything, I'll say it. I... don't need anything else. That's why, give me everyone!"

Murasaki-san lowered her shoulders.

"You are unable to live your life without economic assistance. Your words stating you don't need anything, aren't realistic."

That's right. If I thought as I usually do, I would judge it impossible and stop here.

Despite being a kid I wanted to be an adult... despite being a kid, I wasn't selfish, attempted to be a good kid.

No matter how much I try, I'm still a sixteen year old kid.

The window in my heart opened.

I threw out my little pride out of the window.

What's wrong with being uncool. Being defiant and aggressive, no matter how brazen and shameless, I'll do it.

"Then give me economic assistance. And, give me everyone!"

Murasaki-san, whose cold expression was undisturbed, had opened her eyes wide.

"Are you saying you want all?"

I slowly made a big nod.

"I'm a selfish kid. In the first place, ain't it impossible. Everyone's my little sister you know? Choosing just one is strange! I don't know what kind of contract does Murasaki-san have with Jinya-san, but there's no way Jinya-san would tell me to choose just one."

Now that I have remembered, I could affirm that.

Until now I was suspicious of the person called Taishido Jinya, but now... the me of now, believed in him. If Jinya-san and I are a parent and child, we should desire the same.

"I want to live with everyone like I did until now!!"

Murasaki-san faced downwards.

"And do you really think that'll pass?"

Her voice was terribly cold.

Not just me, these words were cold and harsh to freeze the hearts of little sisters too.

If I anger Murasaki-san, I don't know what'll happen.

Still I... my heart moved forward. I cut through the fierce raging snowstorm, my heart leaning forward, step by step going forward... forward!

"I'm not as reasonable and mature as to endure it and choose just one. The six of us together. Nothing else will be considered!"

Murasaki-san raised her head and stared straight at me.

I won't look away any more. No matter how coldly I'm looked at, behind me, there's an important family I need to protect.

Even if I'm thrust at, I'll bite back.

I won't stop just because I fall just once or twice!

I'll move forward until my legs break. Even if they break and I collapse, I'll move on my hands and knees.

I won't escape any more. I won't deceive myself. We will move forward... towards the future.

Selene, who should have been scared behind me, before I realized had muttered by my right side.

"...Onii-chan. Now, is the time you take step forward... that's why, I"ll do my best with Onii-chan."

Staring at Murasaki-san's face, Selene pleaded.

"...Murasaki-san, please make us and Onii-chan siblings."

It wasn't just Selene. Tomomi stood by my left side as if to snuggle up to me.

"Can't let just Nii-chan handle it. Nii-chan might be a year older than me, but we're eldest son and daughter, the fact we're equal doesn't change."

Tomomi declared with a smile.

"Murasaki-san. If you're to say Nii-chan alone is unreliable, I'll support him as the eldest daughter."

Lining up beside Tomomi was Sayuri.

"Right now, we've left the rails... it's time we find our own way."

Calmly, Sayuri appealed to Murasaki-san.

"Let us decide our path by ourselves. It might be a selfish desire, but it's the path Onii-sama had finally found."

Yuuki stood next to Selene. Naturally, all of us held hands.

While holding hands, Yuuki looked back and reached out to call Mika over.

"From now on as well, we'll continue striving to become accustomed to being siblings. We can do it right, Mika-chan?"

Mika made a big nod and took Yuuki's hand.

"Yup! Mii-chan, Nii-chama, Nee-chamas, we're a family! A proud family!"

Standing connected, we confronted Murasaki-san.

"Murasaki-san. Jinya-san's... please tell us about the will left by Father."

Still with a cold mask-like expression, Murasaki-san quietly spoke.

"I understand... I shall... ans..."

Murasaki-san's voice trembled. We held each other's hands tightly.

"...wer."

For a moment I couldn't believe my ears. To confirm I asked again.

"You didn't say... 'won't answer' have you?"

Once again Murasaki-san restated.

"I shall answer. In the first place... I have scheduled to tell Yoichi-san about it."

"Eh?!! I-is that so?"

"Everyone, it seems like there's no objection."

My own enthusiasm seemed embarrassing.

Still, it seems like clashing my feelings with Murasaki-san wasn't for vain.

And then, Murasaki-san, with a smile like spring sunshine melting snow, said this.

"Yoichi-san. Happy birthday."

Epilogue

The story about from here on, is what we heard from Murasaki-san.

It was all a secret until I'm sixteen years old.

Speaking of which, when we were returning from Maumauland by car, I recall Murasaki-san saying something like this.

"About what happens from now on..."

"Please wait... just a few more days."

Murasaki-san properly waited for this day to come... and told me.

Until certain conditions are fulfilled, the last will and the testament must be kept secret. It was the contract between Jinya-san and Murasaki-san.

The condition was, that I become sixteen years of age. That's all.

Why sixteen years old? Even now, only Jinya-san knows that. But, I think it's because it's the age where I finish compulsory education and start becoming adult... I thought.

For when I'm twenty... thirty... fourty... for each age, a testament was neatly prepared. Only the testament for me as a teenager seemed to be abnormal.

It might have been the last change for me and others to become siblings as children.

If I meet everyone after becoming adults, surely, we wouldn't have become siblings. At most we'd think of each other distant relatives, I think.

To see if I'm suitable to be onii-chan, Jinya-san had prepared a test of "selecting only one sister out of period of two weeks".

As a result, if I chose only one person and shared the heritage with them, it would be acknowledged... that was Jinya-san's thinking.

The problem is, that this teens testament of mine was full of uncertainties.

There was a high chance I wouldn't choose anyone.

In this case, the one troubled wouldn't be us but Murasaki-san.

If I refuse to decide on a single little sister, everything will be entrusted to Murasaki-san.

This was one of the terms in Jinya-san's testament. Thank to that, Murasaki-san shouldered a great responsibility.

The large axe determining the fate of six people was too much for Murasaki-san.

If I chose a single little sister Murasaki-san would be able to live without being troubled.

If she was a more cold and dry person, it would have been easier for her.

But she was distressed.

In the first place, it was a test without the right answer.

No matter who I choose, for Murasaki-san it was an "answer that has to be respected".

But, on the other hand if I choose someone, the family would fall apart. With that said, she couldn't tell me about the testament while I was fifteen. That's why she couldn't say "don't choose, wait".

As not to leak any information to us, Murasaki-san had forced herself to put on a guise of coldness.

She's a good person after all, that Murasaki-san.

And, after she finished telling us about everything, she promised us.

That we'll be able to continue living as we have until now... she said.

And like this, we have become a family.

The first memorable family event was... my birthday party.

It was late, but everyone had gone to do shopping in the supermarket.

The remaining problem... was about Mariko.

Starting from conclusion, Mariko forgave me.

Although it was through the phone, it was the first time I apologized so much.

In the end Mariko said "for some time lunch box will be omurice then", it seemed like she was running out of patience.

After that, I have honestly confessed what's the situation and meet up with her in neighbourhood supermarket.

I introduced her to little sisters and Murasaki-san.

It might be unbelievable but... during introduction, Mariko understood the situation I was placed in and took it in all at once and, if anything, she said "it's like my little sisters" rejoicing.

Umm... that's... Sayuri's gaze as she stared at Mariko was scary.

Something like that happened, but after my birthday party too, Mariko's relationship with my little sisters had become relatively good.

She spoke excitedly with Selene about clothes, that Selene had made a coming out that she's a celebrity on the net and astounded both Mariko and Yuuki.

Selene said "...you didn't ask", saying she didn't have any intention of hiding it, but the believer of Cicada brand Yuuki for a while after had called Selene "sensei!", getting on her bad side for a while.

Tomomi and Sayuri often tried to compete with Mariko for a while... but before I realized Mariko started cooking with Sayuri and learned FPS games, becoming friends with Tomomi.

It's not like I couldn't understand two people who love cooking getting along... but to think Mariko had a talent for games. Not as much as Tomomi, but Tomomi said she had "outstanding talent". Of course, she was better than I am, in games onii-chan had lost his face.

The sisters' idol, Mika, was in high demand among Murasaki-san and Yuuki. The mysterious, magical triangle relationship was realized.

And, speaking of me, from back then too, I went to everyone's room every day.

The rules from until now haven't changed. From time to time there were days where we didn't meet, and at times like these the turns rotated with little sisters that were free.

Without change in the weekends, we gathered in room 701.

After breakfast with everyone, I approached veranda to open window and exchange air inside. I opened only half of the windows.

Receiving the wind blowing in like a sail, the curtains were swayed to the inside.

"...big boobies."

"Woah! Selene! You were here..."

Selene, who should have been watching TV with Mika in the living room stood next to me.

"...when are we going to Nippori?"

"It would be good to after year-end test."

"...I'm relieved."

"Relieved?"

Tidying the curtains by hand, Selene nodded.

"...rather than being concerned by the others all the time, I'm glad you have become a Nii-chan who also thinks of your own convenienece. I want you to pay attention to me, but if it's too much, it'll be troubling."

"Wanting attention but having too much being troubling, you're like cat aren't you, Selene."

"...nyaa."

She took a pose of a beckoning cat. Uu... cute. Quite the destructive power.

Like that, she continued.

"...Onii-chan is forgetful, so please don't forget."

"I'll keep that in mind. The entire time I forgot the most important part..."

Jinya-san's words that have come to me in my dreams.

At the end of the birthday celebration with Jinya-san, I was told.

"Shall I make you a big brother?"

After saying so, Jinya-san added.

"Moreover, there's five little sisters!"

"Really?! Amazing! Yup! I'll become onii-chan!"

Knowing I have five little sisters, I wasn't confused or distressed, just happy.

Having little sisters, I thought more family members is a good thing.

The current situation was Jinya-san's... Father's inheritance.

Grandpa and Grandma might not know about it.

Once we enter summer vacations, I'll go visit Grandpa and Grandma, then speak with them properly.

It might be early, on August there's Bon holidays. Every year, we're going then to Mother's grave...

As I blankly thought of such things, I confirmed with the little sister-roll in front of me.

"By the way... what are you doing?"

"...playing a bagworm."

Wrapped in the curtains, Selene peeked out with just her face and muttered.

"Ahh! Mii-chan wants to do it too!"

Mika noticed it and ran over. Her sprint was a bit dangerous.

"Kyaa?!"

Screaming quietly, her legs tangled.

"Dange... haa."

As Mika was about to fall, momentarily Yuuki and Murasaki-san supported her. Yuuki's actions were faster than my raising voice.

"Are you okay, Mika-chan?"

"Thank you! Yuuki-neechama!"

Tehehe, Mika laughed. With just a smile Yuuki's expression had melted like cheese. How peaceful... and, when I thought that——.

"Let's play a game, Nii-chan!"

"Onii-sama! Let's bake a cake together!"

There was a pincer attack from both sides by Tomomi and Sayuri.

"I'd rather challenge school problems though..."

Tomomi started sulking.

"Then, let's compromise and hit the enemy with baked cake!"

"Cakes are for eating, not for hitting others!"

As the two glared at each other, I spoke to with a smile.

"All right. Let's bake a cake and then go meet Father."

Hearing my sudden proposal, both of them were surprised.

Tomomi asked.

"You say meet, but Dad's dead!"

Sayuri immediately realized and added.

"Can it be, that you want to visit Father's grave?"

She's quite the esper. I nodded surprised.

"I thought it's fine to do it around the Bon Festival. I want to report properly what happened."

Mika raised her hands in banzai gesture.

"Mii-chan wants to go too! I want to do obon dance! I'll dance waltz with Maple."

Yuuki squinted.

"You're right, Nii-san. I'm in favour. Once we decide it, let's consult with Murasaki-san."

Still wrapped up in the curtains, Selene muttered.

"...having to go outside despite the heat... I want to die."

"Hey hey, don't wrap yourself up, come out."

I pulled on the curtain and unrolled Selene's bagworm play. She turned round and round on spot.

"...aaareeee. Odaikan-sama is so crueel."

"Don't make me an evil magistrate!"

Retorting, I finished tidying curtains and opened all the windows.

The wind faintly smelling like summer blew into room 701, it was slightly sultry.

After turning round and round, Selene plopped down on the floor.

"...floor is cool and pleasant."

Tomomi imitated her and lied down on the floor.

"Seriously? Ahh! It's true! This feels good."

With a smile, Mika added onto it.

"Mii-chan will do it too!"

Yuuki was lured in by Mika and lied down.

"Then me too."

When four people did it, not wanting to be last one standing, Sayuri announced her participation.

"U-umm... let me mix in too!"

Head to head side by side on the floor. I smiled to the little sisters spreading around on the floor like flower petals.

The representative, professional laze-aroundist spoke to me.

"...Onii-chan too."

Good grief. Can't be helped. I too... will mix in!

Entering between everyone who was lying down, I stared at the sky outside the window.

Without a single cloud, on the spreading blue sky shone the sun.

Today too, was sunny.

The End

Afterword

I was able to release third volume... wait, something came out agaain?!

Yuuki: "Everyone, this way, here! Let's start the fun afterword!"

Tomomi: "Alright! We little sisters corps will occupy the afterword! Hmm... it says there's four pages. That makes me thrilled!"

Sayuri: "I told Tomomi-san it's better to stop. And yet, she forcibly..."

Tomomi: "Pretending to be a good kid all alone. Sayuri's such a schemer."

Sayuri: "I just wanted to say 'earlier, Yuuki-san appeared in the afterword' and that's all... for a while I thought of appearing here..."

Selene: "...dream come true."

Sayuri: "Come true or not, I didn't think we'd suddenly storm into the afterword. Were this to be revealed to Onii-sama afterwards... w-we'll be punished!"

Mika: "Sayuri-neechama, your face is all red and looks somewhat happy. How weird."

Tomomi: "Does Sayuri have a personality that rejoices over punishment?"

Sayuri: "Don't talk about others as if they were perverts! What if Mika-san misunderstands?"

Mika: "What's a pervert? Mii-chan wants to know."

Yuuki: "Well well you two. Let's leave it at that. Also, Mika-chan, pervert is... that's... uh... I'll tell you later. We're at afterword after all! We need to use it more meaningfully or it'll be a waste."

Selene: "...I'm sorry."

Tomomi: "Selene immediately goes troublesome. This time you're on the cover, appeal better to the readers."

Selene: "...appeal?"

Sayuri: "T-that's right! Being graced with the cover and yet... moreover, h-having a hand in such place, it's hidden but that's..."

Selene: "......?"

Mika: "Looks like Selene-neechama has no panties."

Selene: "...I put on the shirt, but changing clothes turned bothersome halfway and stopped."

Mika: "Even when busy, or hurrying, you need to wear panties properly. You'll get cold and catch a cold."

Selene: "...I'll be careful next time."

Tomomi: "Listen Mika. There's high possibility those who don't wear panties are perverts."

Yuuki: "Don't bring it up again! Let's make that talk fade out! Yup!"

Mika: "Pervert? Is that so Tomomi-neechama? Then, Selene-neechama is a pervert?"

Selene: "...I didn't know. To think I was a pervert."

Yuuki: "Stooop! Half of the page was used already, but it's all about perverts!"

Tomomi: "Tchh. I wanted to heat it up. But well, as expected finishing afterword with perverts is no good. Speaking of which, in previous afterword you spoke about us right? In that case, how about every one of us says one good thing about Yuuki?"

Yuuki: "S-stop that Tomomi-chan! It's embarrassing!"

Tomomi: "Don't refrain! Hmm, let's see. Yuuki's good part is... her nice body! I win when it comes to breasts, but your bottom, legs and such.... uhehehehe."

Yuuki: "That's perverted! You're scary, Tomomi-chan!"

Sayuri: "It's different with me but... how you're happy to be bullied."
Yuuki: "You started by saying you're different but, don't look at me as if I was your comrade!"

Mika: "Aaalways saving Mii-chan, like a prince!"

Yuuki: "Yup. That's right I guess. I'm happy too to save Mika-chan. But, I did my best for so long to be feminine, so please spare me with calling me a prince!"

Selene: "...unexpectedly good at retorting."

Yuuki: "It's 'cause Nii-san isn't here!"

Selene: "...kakao-san. Thank you for drawing a cute cover."

Yuuki: "And here goes sudden meta remark?! In that case make it earlier! Eh, uh, the afterword is about to end."

Tomomi: "It went past in a flash."

Sayuri: "Time passes quickly when you have fun."

Selene: "...that's enough for now."

Mika: "Can't it become tomorrow faster, eh."

Yuuki: "Umm, at the end, everyone together."

Thank you for reading!

あとがき

どうも、kakaoです！

『お前をお兄ちゃんにしてやろうか!?さんっ!』
いかがでしたでしょうか…！

ハラハラする展開で
どうなっちゃうの!?って場面もあり、
今までどおり妹たちの可愛らしい部分もありと
そんなドタバタな雰囲気を
少しでもイラストで伝えられてたら嬉しいです！
世霊音可愛いよ世霊音！

それではー！

kakao

Little Sisters & (bonus) Sugiyama Ryuu

Hello, kakao here!

"Omae wo Onii-chan ni Shite Yarouka?! San っ!"

How did you like it...?!

What happened with that suspenseful development?! There are also scenes like that this time, I hope I have managed to relay the little sisters cuteness and disparate atmosphere in the illustrations, if I did then I'm really glad!

Selene's cute, really cute!

See you then!